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# Balmerino

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## And its Abbey

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### A PARISH HISTORY

WITH NOTICES OF THE ADJACENT DISTRICT

BY

JAMES CAMPBELL, D.D., F.S.A. Scot.

MINISTER OF BALMERINO

AUTHOR OF A HISTORY OF THE CELTIC CHURCH IN SCOTLAND

Pt. I

A NEW EDITION,

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

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And its Abbey

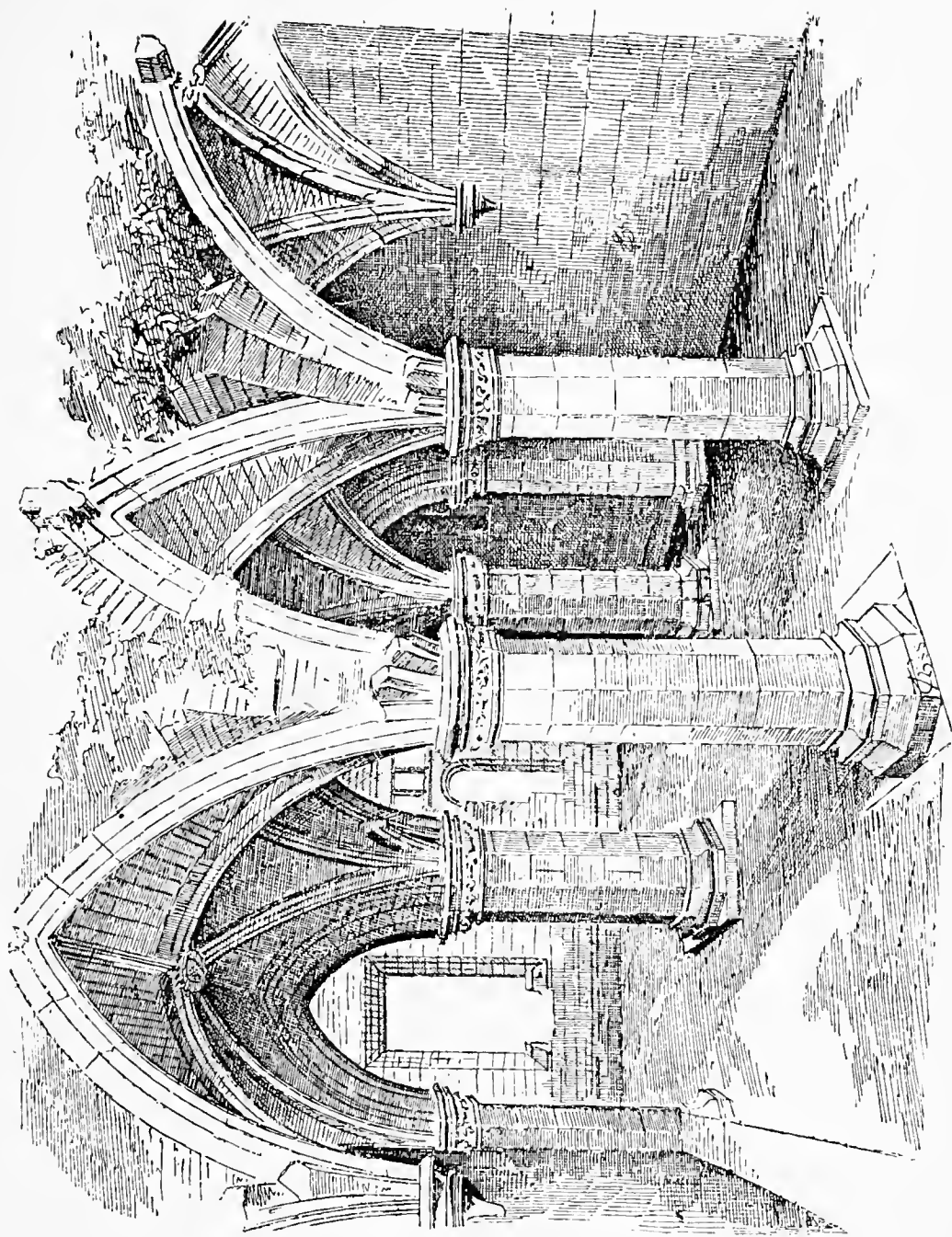




“ Historia testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriæ,  
magistra vitæ, nuncia vetustatis.”

—CICERO, *De Oratore*.





BALMERINO ABBEY. CHAPTER-HOUSE, FROM NORTH-WEST.



## P R E F A C E

SINCE the first edition of this work was published—so long ago as in the year 1867—new sources of information on many of the subjects discussed in it have been laid open, while various important Records have been printed by Government, as well as by Societies and individuals, and have thus been rendered more accessible to inquirers. In the present edition the fresh material thus obtained has been utilised, nearly the whole has been re-written, and the narrative has been brought down to the present time. The volume has grown to a larger size than may be thought desirable for such a work; but it may be pointed out that, in addition to the kind of matter usually contained in Parish Histories, it embraces a full account of Balmerino Abbey, which might well have formed a separate treatise.

When the first edition was issued, Scottish Parish Histories were rare: now they are numerous; and the acceptance they have generally met with proves that they have supplied a real want. The multiplication of such works is of advantage in various ways. Intelligent interest in particular localities is thus promoted among their inhabitants; the reader is enabled to form distinct conceptions of great national movements by observing their effects within the limited area of the district with which he may be best acquainted; and the general history of the country—especially in reference to social progress—receives valuable illustration from the light thus made to converge upon it from many different quarters.



As the names of many persons and places are variously spelt in this volume, it is proper to state that the forms adopted are generally those found in the original documents in which the names occur.

The Manuscript of the Abbey Chartulary, the substance of which has been incorporated in the present work, is preserved in the Advocates' Library. It is a small octavo volume of twenty-six and a half leaves of parchment, containing sixty-nine documents in the Latin language. The writing, which is probably to be assigned to the latter half of the fourteenth century, is beautifully executed. A facsimile of the first page is given in the present work. The colophon, which is twice repeated on the fly-leaves of the volume, and is executed in a handwriting evidently more recent than the body of the manuscript, is as follows:—

Liber Sancte Marie de Balmorinach. Qui eum alienaverit sit ipse alienatus a regno Dei. Scriptum est hoc per fratrem Laurencium predicti loci. Anno Domini M<sup>o</sup>CCCC<sup>mo</sup> sexto X<sup>o</sup>. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

The Chartulary was printed in 1841 for the Abbotsford Club, the Chartulary of Lindores, in a very imperfect form, being included in the same volume. The Editor, the late W. B. D. D. Turnbull, has appended to the Balmerino Chartulary twelve documents referring to the Abbey, collected from other sources. The contents of the Chartulary relate almost exclusively to the endowments and privileges of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Translation*—‘The Book of Saint Mary of Balmorinach. Whosoever shall alienate it, may he himself be alienated from the kingdom of God. This has been written by brother Laurence of the foresaid place. In the year of our Lord 1416. Amen.’





Monastery, and throw little light on its internal economy. As a Conventual Register it is evidently incomplete even in respect of the period, and the kind of transactions, which it embraces; while its most recent date appears to be not later than the middle of the fourteenth century. The Editor, in his Introduction, has given a list of the Regular Abbots and Commendators whose names were known to him. The present volume contains the names of four additional Abbots which the Author has discovered, and which probably make the list complete.

The reader's attention is directed to Appendix Nos. XXIX and XXX, giving the results of excavations which were made at Battle Law and Greenhill while this volume was passing through the press, and which should be read in connection with pages 6-7 and 8.

It is hoped that the new matter embodied in this edition, and the numerous illustrations it contains, will render it more worthy of the favour accorded to the book when it first appeared.

The Author has now to perform the pleasing duty of acknowledging his obligations to many friends for assistance generously rendered in connection with this edition. Among these his special thanks are due to Mr. Alexander Hutcheson, F.S.A. Scot., for photographs and drawings of ancient memorials, and for much help in other ways; to Dr. David Hay Fleming for pointing out sources of information and supplying important documents; to Mr. Robert C. Walker for furnishing him with the results of his heraldic and genealogical researches; to Mr. J. Maitland Thomson, Curator of the Historical Department of H.M. General Register House, for valued counsel and help in examining Records under his charge; to the



Rev. Walter Macleod for judicious selection and accurate transcription of documents; to Mr. Francis Sharpe for permission to copy the Model Plan of a Cistercian Abbey contained in his late father's work on the Architecture of the Cistercians; to the Council of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland for the use of several Illustrations from the Proceedings of the Society; to Messrs. Macgibbon and Ross for the use of their series of drawings of Balmerino Abbey prepared by them for their standard work on the Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland; and to the proprietors of Balmerino Parish for their countenance and aid in various matters connected with their estates and families.

THE MANSE, BALMERINO,  
*20th September 1899.*



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# PART I

## HISTORY OF THE PARISH PREVIOUS TO THE FOUNDATION OF THE ABBEY

ABOUT A.D. 1225



# BALMERINO AND ITS ABBEY

## CHAPTER I

### PREHISTORIC

‘All that tread  
The globe are but a handful to the tribes  
That slumber in its bosom.’

—BRYANT.

IN endeavouring to trace the history of the Parish of Balmerino from the earliest times of which any memorials exist, we are at the outset met by the questions, Who were its primitive inhabitants, and what can be learned concerning them? In order to give some intelligible answer to these questions, it will be necessary to view the Parish in connection with the adjacent district and the country at large.

Preceding all written records of Scotland there is an unwritten history, which, though very imperfect, is trustworthy so far as it goes. Materials for this history are mainly derived from articles of various kinds which have been found imbedded in the soil. It was the custom of our pagan ancestors to dispose of their dead either by interment or cremation. When the body was consumed by the fire of the funeral pile, its ashes were collected in an urn made of clay and deposited underground. Along with the remains of the dead were frequently buried, as objects highly valued by them, or as their equipment for another world, their weapons, implements, and personal ornaments; domestic and other animals;



and vessels containing food and drink. The custom is thus referred to by the poet—

‘ Here bring the last gifts, and with these  
The last lament be said ;  
Let all that pleased and still may please  
Be buried with the dead.’

While many of the articles which have been exhumed were associated with sepulture, a much greater number had been placed in the earth for the mere purpose of concealment, or had found their way thither through the operation of other causes. Thus from various sources numerous relics have been recovered, illustrating the habits of races who peopled our island many ages before the dawn of history. The oldest depositaries contain articles made of stone, horn, and bone, but none formed of metal. When the art of working in metals was introduced, bronze—a compound of copper and tin—was that first employed ; and the oldest metallic implements which have been found are made of this material. Iron came into use at a comparatively late period.

During the Stone Age such remains of the dead as have been found were often buried in chambers constructed of unhewn slabs, and divided into several compartments, with a narrow passage giving access from the exterior. Over the whole was raised a cairn of stones, which was of various forms, and was bounded by a facing or retaining wall of masonry. Both burnt human bones and unburnt skeletons, as well as bones of animals—probably the remains of funeral feasts—have been discovered in those chambered cairns, which had the dead in some cases ‘placed with care to sit grimly in their subterranean houses.’ In such cairns have also been found clay urns, spear-heads and arrow-heads, celts or battle-axes, knives or saws—all made of flint—as well as stone hammers and other implements. Another form of sepulchre was the dolmen—a Celtic word meaning a stone table—formerly called a cromlech, consisting of a large slab or block of stone resting on three or four



unhewn columns, within which the remains of the dead were deposited. The dolmen had sometimes a cairn or a barrow raised over it, or was surrounded by a circle of 'standing stones.' Monuments of this kind are rare in Scotland.

During the Bronze Age the remains of the dead were frequently deposited in cists or coffins made of slabs of undressed stone. The body, when unburnt, was laid on its side, with the knees drawn up toward the breast, and often with one or two urns or food vessels placed beside it. There were also graves without cists, containing either unburnt skeletons or ashes and burnt bones collected in an urn, or having an urn inverted over them. Sometimes a large urn is found with a small one within it. A circular cairn of stones was often raised over the remains. Specially characteristic of the Bronze Age was a circle of 'standing stones' surrounding the place of sepulture. Sometimes there were two or even three concentric stone circles, with or without a mound and trench inclosing the whole. From the numerous interments which in many cases took place within the same stone circle or other place of burial, it is supposed that these were cemeteries used by a tribe or the inhabitants of a district. Weapons and other articles made of bronze are now found, though stone implements and flint knives and arrow-heads were still used. Graves of this period have also yielded necklaces and beads of jet, and personal ornaments of gold.

When the use of iron was introduced, which appears to have taken place some time before the commencement of the Christian era, implements of stone and bronze were not entirely superseded. From its liability to corrosion, comparatively few relics of iron have been found.

The introduction of Christianity had the effect of gradually abolishing both the practice of cremation and that of providing the dead with implements and ornaments.<sup>1</sup> •

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<sup>1</sup> Old customs die hard. The copy of Shakespeare which the late Lord Tennyson, Poet-Laureate, had been reading during the last days of his life was enclosed in a metal box, laid in his coffin, and buried with him.





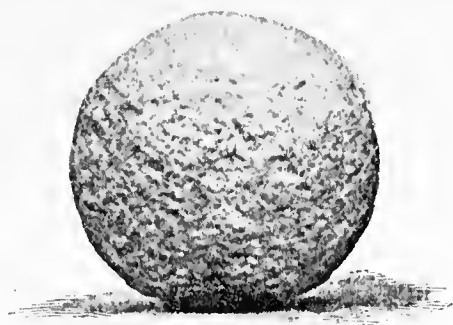
All over the country there still exist remains of ancient forts constructed of loose stones or of earth. They consisted of a single rampart or entrenchment, or of two or more concentric ones, of a circular or oval shape, enclosing a level area. Within and around them flint arrow-heads and other articles have been found.

That the people some of whose customs have been thus briefly noticed, of whatever race or races they were, inhabited the North of Fife, is evident from the relics which have been discovered in the district. It is to be regretted, however, that many ancient memorials have been destroyed, and that in few cases has the description of such as have been exhumed or removed come down to us accompanied by those details which might indicate to what age they belonged.

The following sepulchral and other prehistoric remains have been found in Balmerino parish.

On the elevated plateau called Battle Law, which forms part of Fincraigs farm, in the year 1873 it became necessary to remove a large stone which lay under the soil and obstructed the plough. This proved to be a rough, unhewn slab 5 feet in length and 3 feet in breadth. While it was being lifted, the curiosity of the workmen was strongly excited by finding that their tools sank into a cavity beneath it. The greatest care was therefore taken by them to preserve entire whatever the cavity might be found to contain. Their anxiety was rewarded by discovering that the slab formed the lid of an ancient cist, within which was a small but beautifully shaped clay urn in perfect preservation. The depth of the cist was 2 feet, the length 2 feet 9 inches, the breadth at one end equal to the length, and 20 inches at the other end. Its axis extended from north-west to south-east, and the eastern end was the broader of the two. Each of the sides of the cist consisted of a single rough slab, except the north side, which was formed by the natural rock. The bottom was composed of clay of a slightly greenish tinge. The urn was found in the south-east corner of

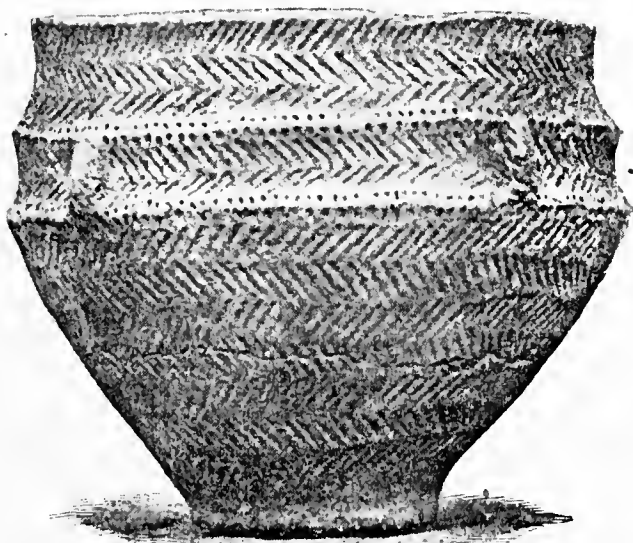




CANNON STONE-BALL FOUND AT NAUGHTON TOWER.



STONE VESSEL FOUND AT WINDYGATES, BATTLE LAW.



URN OF THE "FOOD-VESSEL TYPE," FOUND AT BATTLE LAW IN 1873.



the cist, lying on its side. It measured  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height,  $6\frac{1}{4}$  inches in its greatest diameter, and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches across the mouth. Its outer surface was covered with bands of the 'herring-bone' ornamentation so common on ancient British urns; and under the upper edge were four low, unpierced knobs or 'ears.' The cist contained no bones or charcoal, nor anything but the urn, which was empty. This having been carefully removed, the upper slab of the cist was replaced, and the whole covered over with soil. The cist appeared to belong to the Bronze Age. There were indications of the existence of other cists near the same spot, which have not yet been excavated. In connection with the urn thus discovered, it is worthy of notice that a cist was found in 1860 at Mill of Invergowrie, containing an urn very similar to it, and placed also in its south-east corner, such a position probably indicating some symbolic meaning now unknown.<sup>1</sup>

On Battle Law, also, cairns existed at a former period which have been cleared away; and near by, if not in connection with, these cairns have been found 'stone coffins, bones, and pieces of broken swords.'<sup>2</sup> Many years ago mounds in a small plantation called the 'Graves Wood,' at the east end of the village of Gauldry, on being opened up were found to contain a stone coffin. About the year 1820 several stone coffins of red sandstone, and in 1839 two stone coffins, were found near the same spot, about fifty yards north of the Newport road, and opposite 'Graves Wood.' South of the farmhouse of Peashills, about a mile and a half north-east of Battle Law, two pieces of gold, of the combined value of £14 sterling, were found, one of them in 1818, and the other in 1826. 'One piece was in the form of a ball, and appeared to have been the knob usually attached to the hilt of a sword'; the other—a small portion of which is preserved at Naughton, the greater part having been sold by the finders and melted—

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. Soc. Antiq. (Scot.)*, vi. p. 394.

<sup>2</sup> *New Statistical Account of Balmerino*, p. 587.



has been described as 'a hollow cylinder, of a curved form, tapering towards each end, and having three rows of raised reticulated work from one end to the other on the outer side of the curve.' It had also a rod of copper running through it. Opinions differed as to whether it had adorned a helmet, a breastplate, or a sword handle.<sup>1</sup> Cairns or mounds at the same place were found to contain several human skulls, each being enclosed within a square cist of undressed slabs of stone. The spot is indicated on the map of the Ordnance Survey. These various memorials are supposed to be relics of some battle fought in the locality, but their age is difficult to determine.

On the summit of the Greenhill, west of Cultra, may still be seen what appears to be the lower part of an ancient cairn, which has not been explored. It is a circular heap of loose stones, about fifty feet in diameter, the outer ring being formed of large stones set on edge. Another cairn is said to have existed on the top of Airdie Hill, on Grange farm, before the field was brought under cultivation. Between Birkhill House and the Tay clay urns were discovered many years ago. On Gallowhill there were several cairns which, when cleared away, were found to contain urns, none of which could be preserved. The Gallowstone on the top of Cultra Hill is said to have been at one time twice its present size, and to have rested on smaller stones—in short, to have somewhat resembled a dolmen or cromlech. Perhaps its later name conceals its original purpose. Marks of a boring-tool which it bears show that it was blasted with gunpowder when, many years ago, it was reduced to its present dimensions by some persons who expected to find treasure under it.

In the neighbouring parishes, also, many relics have from time to time been discovered, which supply additional illustrations of the customs of the ancient inhabitants of the district.

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<sup>1</sup> *N. S. A.*, p. 587; and Leighton's *History of Fife*, ii. 77.





In the parish of Flisk were found many years ago on the hillside, and on the farms of East Flisk and Balhelvie, 'several rude stone coffins, with urns in them containing burnt bones. The urns were a mixture of clay and rotten rock baked in the sun, and most of them fell to pieces on being exposed to the air. Burnt bones were also discovered in a cairn of stones on the top of Whirly Kip (or rather, perhaps, Whitlaw-cap), a conical rising ground on Fliskmill farm.'<sup>1</sup>

In Creich parish, about a century ago, there were found 'in a rising spot of ground near the Manse two brown jars, with their bottoms upwards, and a broad stone laid on each, containing human bones.'<sup>2</sup> Two urns were discovered many years ago 'a little to the west of the present house of Parbroath, and two stone coffins a little to the east of it. Urns have also been found on the lands of Balmeadowside. All these were deposited on knolls, and contained human bones.'<sup>3</sup> In the year 1816, on the farm of Upper Luthrie, were found, 8 or 10 inches below the surface, two concentric circles of stones, from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet high, with a cylindrical stone pillar of similar height in the centre; and near to this pillar two slabs with sculptures in relief on them, one of which was sent to the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries, Edinburgh, where it may still be seen. In the following year another monument very similar to this was found about 500 yards east of it, and was for better preservation carefully removed by the Reverend Alexander Lawson to a spot behind Creich manse, where it still remains, with the stones replaced in their original relative positions. It consists of two concentric circles, with a cylindrical sandstone, 14 inches in height and 1 foot in diameter, in the centre. The outer circle contains thirty-two, and the inner one sixteen stones, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  foot in height, and from 8 to 18 inches in breadth—those occupying the cardinal points being larger than the

<sup>1</sup> *N. S. A. Flisk*, 601.

<sup>2</sup> *O. S. A. Creich*, iv. 230.

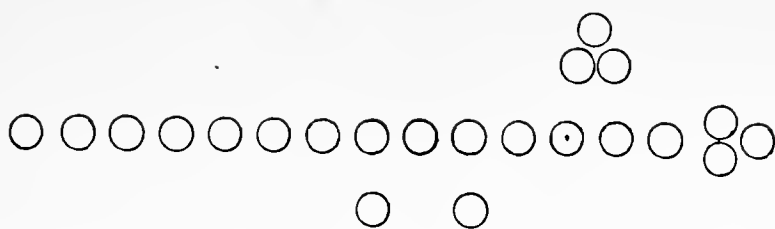
<sup>3</sup> *N. S. A. Creich*, 644.



others. The stones of both circles are placed close to each other, edge to edge. The diameter of the outer circle is about 15, and that of the inner one about 6 feet. Due south of the central cylinder, and between it and the inner circle, were placed horizontally two slabs, with figures carved on them in high relief, and well executed. The remaining space between the centre and the inner circle was laid with pavement. The space between the two circles was unpaved. The stones of the inner circle were of sandstone, which does not occur in that locality. Those of the outer circle were of the whinstone of the neighbourhood. Under one of the sculptured stones were found small burnt human bones and ashes. They were not enclosed in a cist, nor was there any building under the surface. Certain of the figures cut on one of the slabs of this monument are very similar to the figures on the sculptured slab of the one already mentioned. There are what appear to be representations of the soles of a pair of shoes, a circle with a cross within it—the limbs of the cross being at right angles to each other—which may be intended to represent a wheel. On one of the stones is the figure of a spade. What the other figures represent is more uncertain. The sculptures raise difficult questions in regard to the time of the erection of these monuments. It is evident that cremation had been then practised at Creich, though the degree of culture and art indicated by the sculptures seems to point to a time subsequent to the abolition of this pagan custom elsewhere. The last-mentioned monument, with the accompanying sculptured slabs, the sculptured slab of the first-mentioned monument, and a piece of whinstone shaped like the frustum of a cone, perforated by a round hole, and having a projecting ear at its greater end, found near the same place, are all figured in the *Edinburgh Magazine* for December 1817, which also, as well as the *New Statistical Account of Creich*, contains a description of them, of which the foregoing account is a summary.

In 1845 there were found about a quarter of a mile south of





TWENTY-TWO URNS FOUND NEAR CARPHIN, PARISH OF CREICH,  
IN 1845.

Fig. 1.

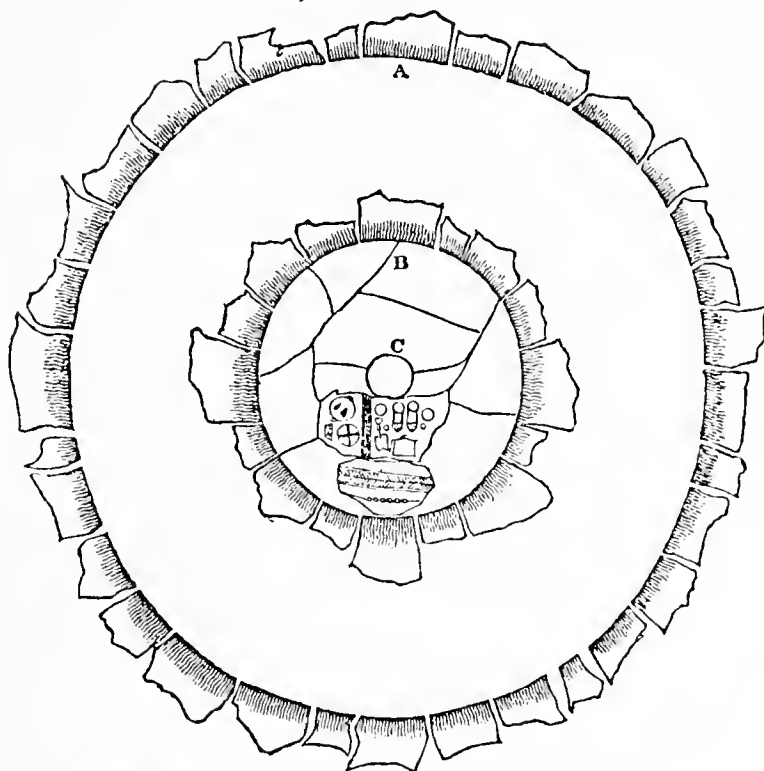


Fig. 2.

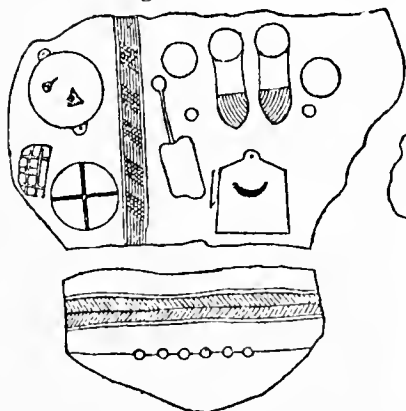


Fig. 3.

Fig. 5.



Fig 4.

STONE CIRCLES, ETC., FOUND NEAR LUTHRIE, PARISH OF CREICH,  
IN 1816, AND NOW PLACED AT CREICH MANSE.



these monuments, and about 500 yards north-east of Carphin House, twenty-two urns. Fourteen of them were set in a straight line running from east to west, and about 3 feet apart, with the exception of the two farthest west, which were distant 5 feet from each other. The others were placed in various positions near them. All were found about a foot and a half from the surface, and one contained pieces of charred wood. Both the forms and the ornamentation of the urns were different. One was placed with its mouth uppermost, and had a lid upon it. Most of the others had their mouths inverted, and all of them contained bones and black earth. In one there was a 'cup' filled with earth, without bones. The cup was very small, being only  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inch in height, and  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches in breadth. Another was 'cradle-shaped.'<sup>1</sup>

In 1847, about 150 yards from the site of one of the above-mentioned stone circles, there were found six inverted urns without cists, and all close to each other, but in no regular order. One rested on a small flagstone, and the others on the rock.<sup>2</sup>

In Kilmany parish 'a considerable number of stone coffins have been dug up behind the farmhouse of Starr. A few earthen vessels with bones were found on the farm of Drumnod, and one of the same description at Kilmany.'<sup>3</sup> In the highest part of Drumnod Wood are remains of three stone circles not far from each other. Their position is marked on the Ordnance Survey Map. One of them, which is tolerably distinct and complete, is about 15 yards in diameter. A few years ago two trenches were dug across its interior space, through its centre, and at right angles to each other, for the purpose of ascertaining whether it contained sepulchral deposits; but nothing whatever was found. The stones of this circle are only about 2 feet in height. Of the other two circles the traces are very indistinct.

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. Soc. Antiq. (Scot.)*, vii. 404.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 406.

<sup>3</sup> *N. S. A. Kilmany*, 544.





Forgan parish contained in 1838 'several cairns or tumuli composed of small stones, in conspicuous situations, but they had not been thoroughly explored.' A few urns were found some years earlier in cutting the public road at Newport.<sup>1</sup> About the same time, on the heights south of Northfield farm-steading, in a cairn of stones surrounded by a 'circular work of earth,' was discovered a large-sized coffin composed of slabs of 'roughly polished yellow sandstone,' containing a great quantity of bones.<sup>2</sup> Near Westwood was found in 1855 a 'stone coffin composed of rude undressed flags of whinstone. It contained bones, but no urn.' In 1865, at Westwood also, eight urns were found, at depths from 8 to 20 inches, arranged in the form of an uncompleted circle, with another urn in the centre. The circle was 14 feet in diameter. The form and ornamentation of the urns were different in all. Five of them were inverted. A small urn was found within a larger one. Another had a slightly larger one partly placed within it in an inverted and reclining posture, and contained adult and infant burnt bones mixed together, which were conjectured to be those of a parent—probably a mother—and child. All contained burnt human bones, and burnt ashes were placed around them for protection. Amongst the ashes encircling one of them were found particles of ears of grain.<sup>3</sup> This and some of the other examples previously noticed show that the people whose memorials they are buried their dead not singly nor indiscriminately, but in spots selected for the purpose. At Tayfield, in 1870, there were found in an urn, which was enclosed in a stone cist, fragments of a necklace, consisting of a series of plates of jet or shale, and alternating rows of beads, which, so far as recovered, when joined together, formed a beautiful work of art. A separate triangular piece was probably a pendant attached to the middle of the neck-

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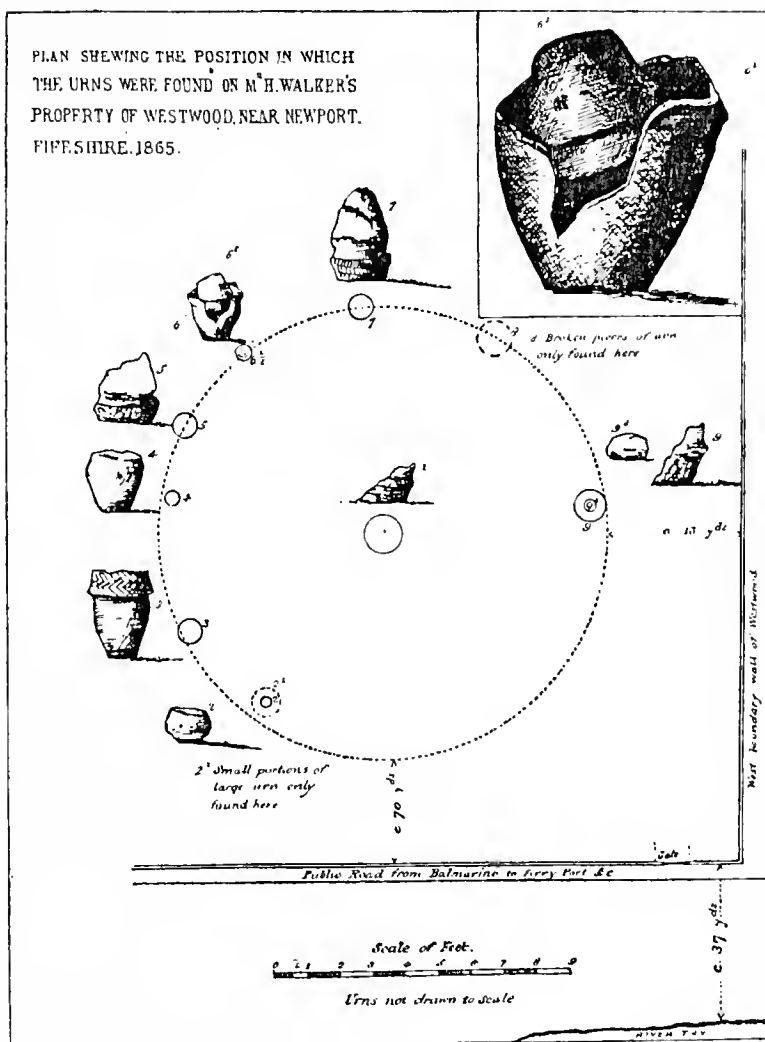
<sup>1</sup> *N. S. A. Forgan*, 508.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. Soc. Antiq. (Scot.)*, vi. 392. In the Ordnance Survey Map the cairn is marked 'Site of a Roman camp (supposed).'

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 388.



PLAN SHEWING THE POSITION IN WHICH  
THE URNS WERE FOUND ON M<sup>r</sup> H. WALKER'S  
PROPERTY OF WESTWOOD, NEAR NEWPORT.  
FIFE-SHIRE, 1865.







NECKLACE OF JET FOUND AT TAYFIELD IN 1870.



lace.<sup>1</sup> In 1882 there were found on the estate of Tayfield 'two cinerary inverted urns containing partially calcined bones.'<sup>2</sup> A few years ago stone coffins were laid bare on the Castle hill at Newton in course of the removal of part of it in connection with railway and other operations. About the same period a similar discovery was made on the east side of, and close to, the public road leading from Newton to Wormit, at the point where the Balmerino road strikes off from it; and many years previously stone coffins were found about 50 yards distant from the same spot, on the south side of the Balmerino road.

In the extensive sandy plain called Tents Moor, in the parishes of Leuchars and Ferry-port-on-Craig, many relics have been found of a prehistoric population. 'How rich it is in these remains'—to quote a recent writer—'is known not to the casual visitor, but to the frequenter of this unpromising waste. Its light and shifting surface is peculiarly adapted for hiding, and so preserving, interesting relics. A windy day long ago would cover them over with sand-drift; and a windy day now will expose them, often as fresh in appearance as when they were in use. It is no uncommon thing for the wanderer to find lying on the surface a flint instrument from the new Stone Age which yesterday's gale had laid bare. Fragments of ancient pottery, including cinerary urns, abound on the Tayport side; and here and there, chiefly towards the Eden, kitchen-middens, formed of the shells of edible molluscs, add their chapter of ancient history.'<sup>3</sup>

Remains still exist of several hill forts on the chain of heights extending along the North of Fife in a line parallel to the Firth of Tay, and forming the eastern portion of the Ochil range. One of these may be seen on the Black Cairn south of Newburgh, consisting of a circular rampart of loose

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. Soc. Antiq. (Scot.)*, viii. p. 412.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, xvii. 272.

<sup>3</sup> J. H. Crawford's article on 'Fifeshire' in the *Scottish Review* for January 1893.

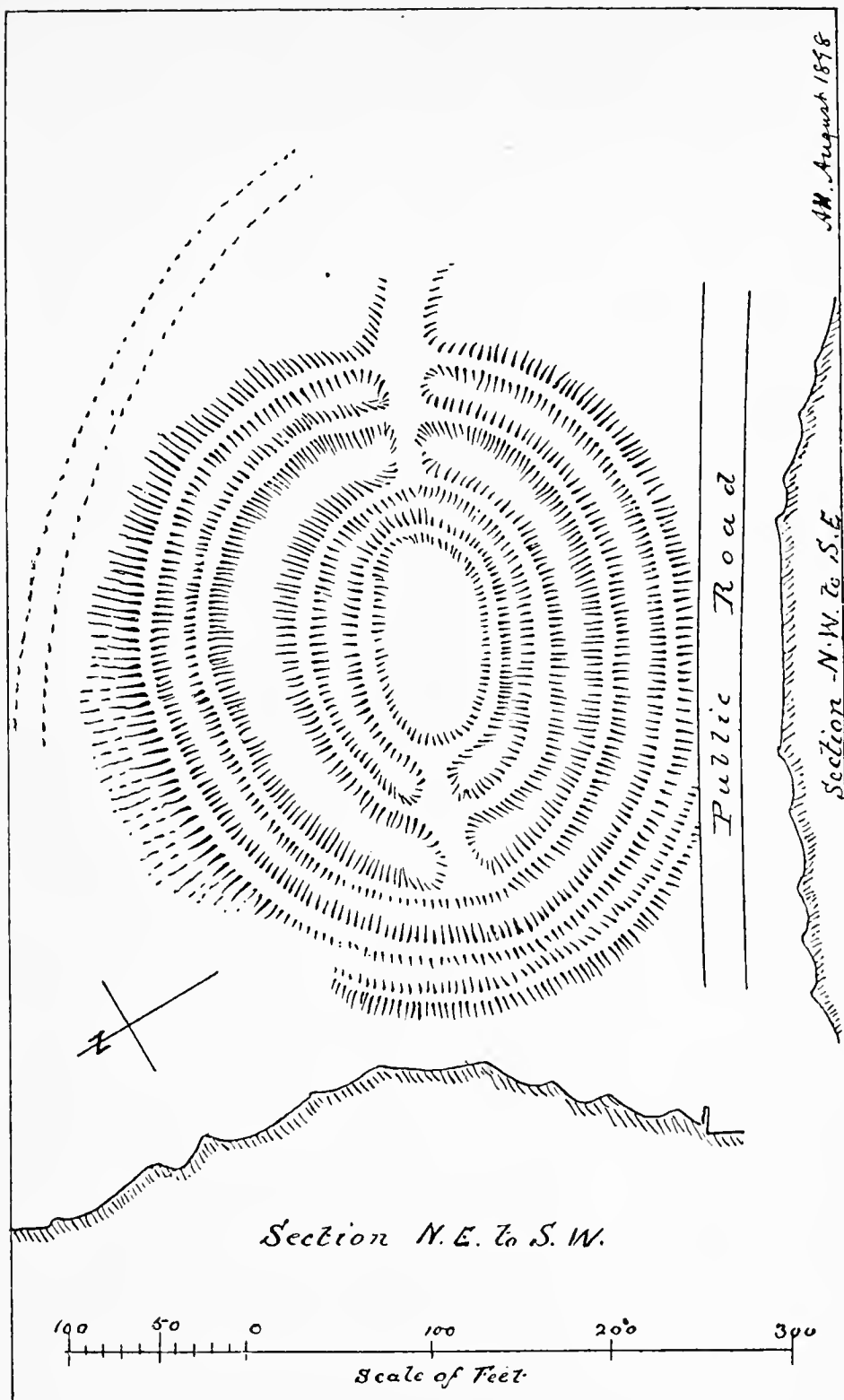




stones and earth. On Clachard Crag, south-east of Newburgh, there is a much more extensive work, composed of several concentric walls of stones and earth. On the summit of Norman's Law is another fort, having two circular and concentric ramparts of loose stones enclosing a considerable extent of nearly level ground. On the Greencraig, in the parish of Creich, there are two similar concentric mounds of stone extending round the hill, except where it is precipitous—one at the summit, and the other at some distance below it. Near the western boundary of the St. Fort woods, in Forgan parish, there is an ancient fort or camp still in good preservation. It is of an oval shape, and consists of several concentric ramparts and ditches. Its length over all, from east to west, is about 115, and within the lines about 42 yards. On the north side it is defended by a steep slope, with a small sheet of water at its base; and on the south side by a gentler declivity, which, however, has been cut by the public road leading to Leuchars. It is probable that before this road was formed, the camp was much more extensive on that side than it now is. Strange to say, this camp is not noticed either in the Old or the New Statistical Account of Forgan.

As regards the people whose memorials in the North of Fife have thus been described, it is now generally agreed that the British Islands have been occupied by several races who landed on their shores successively, but at long intervals of time. Probably the first which left any vestiges of its presence was a dark-haired non-Aryan race, akin to the Basque or Iberian people of the north-west provinces of Spain. They used implements and weapons of stone, but none of metal; and buried their dead in the chambered cairns and the long barrows which have been found in many parts of Britain. The people who followed them were of the Celtic race, and formed that branch of it known as the Goidelic or Gaelic. It was probably they who introduced the use of bronze implements, and buried their dead in the round cairns. They were followed by another branch





PLAN OF CAMP IN ST FORT WOOD.



of the Celtic race, kindred in blood and language to the people of Gaul, and distinctively known as Britons. Both Gaels and Britons arrived before the dawn of history. About the commencement of the Christian era the Iberian race was still represented in Britain by the people of South Wales and of the south-west of England, where and, in the opinion of some, in certain parts also of Ireland and the Scottish Highlands, their descendants may still be recognised. At the same period the Britons were in possession of the greater part of our island south of the Firth of Forth and Clyde, and also of the central territory north of these estuaries extending to the *river* Tay. Their modern representatives are the Cymric people of Wales, and, on the Continent, the inhabitants of Brittany. The Gaels, according to the opinion of most writers on this subject, still occupied the remainder of Scotland, including Fife.



## CHAPTER II

### ROMAN INVASION : CALEDONIANS OR PICTS

‘ The North remained untouched, where those who scorned  
To stoop retired ; and, to their keen effort  
Yielding at last, recoiled the Roman power.’

—THOMSON.

THE first *recorded* event in the history of the North of Fife is that related by Tacitus in his very interesting *Life of the Roman general Agricola*, when he describes its inhabitants as gazing with astonishment and terror on a Roman fleet sailing up the Firth of Tay. This incident took place in the year 83, and how it came about may be briefly told.

Though Julius Cæsar had landed in Kent in the year 55 B.C., no vigorous effort to subdue the island was made for nearly a century afterwards. But in A.D. 43 the Emperor Claudius sent his lieutenant, Aulus Plautius, into Britain for this purpose. Under him and subsequent generals the Roman legions appear to have advanced during the next thirty-five years to the southern boundary of the territory now forming Scotland. In the year 78 Agricola was sent to govern Britain. During his third summer in the island—which coincided with the year 80—he led his army northwards as far as the estuary of the Taus, or Tay. The fourth summer was spent in constructing a chain of forts between the Firths of Forth and Clyde, and the fifth in exploring the west coast, opposite Ireland. During the following summer—that is, of 83—Agricola, having with his army ‘encompassed the states (or territories of the tribes) situated beyond the Forth, explored their harbours with his fleet.’ At the same time the Roman





infantry, cavalry, and marines frequently mingled together in camp, and, as warriors will do, boastfully compared the exploits they had severally performed, and the dangers and hardships they had encountered by sea and land. These statements, when taken along with other parts of the narrative of Tacitus, appear to indicate that the scene of Agricola's military operations was the peninsula of Fife. That these operations, however, were of a rapid character, seems probable from the absence of well authenticated Roman camps in the county, with the exception of one which is said to have existed at Loch Ore, but has been destroyed. Agricola learned from some of the natives who had been taken prisoners, that their countrymen had been astounded by the appearance of the Roman fleet penetrating into the recess or secluded part of their sea—*tamquam aperto muris sui secreto*—as depriving the vanquished of their last refuge. This statement can hardly be otherwise interpreted than as signifying that the fleet had sailed up the Firth of Tay, an incident which must have created intense excitement on both sides of the estuary. But the vigorous attacks made by the natives on the forts which had been erected by the Romans—apparently in the territory west of Fife, which they had overrun in their third campaign—so alarmed them, that many counselled an immediate retreat beyond the Forth, in order to prevent their forcible expulsion.<sup>1</sup> The site of the battle of Mons Grampius or Graupius, subsequently fought, in which Agricola defeated 30,000 Caledonians, has been claimed, amongst other places, for the neighbourhood of the West Lomond Hill; but the real scene of this great conflict was almost certainly the district of Stormount, in Perthshire. After this victory Agricola withdrew his forces into the territory of the Horesti,<sup>2</sup> which some have identified with Fife; but it appears to have been really the district situated between the river Tay and the Forth, in which the

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus, *Vita Agric.*, cc. 23-25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 38.



eastern half of Fife was not included. An earthen jar was discovered in 1808 at Craigiehill, in the parish of Leuchars, containing nearly a hundred silver coins in perfect preservation, stamped with the heads of the Roman Emperors Severus, Antoninus, and others. A silver coin of the reign of Tiberius was found about seventy years ago in good condition near the village of Balmerino.<sup>1</sup> These facts suggest the probability, though they do not establish the certainty, of the presence of the Romans at *some* period in the North-East of Fife.

From the Geography of Ptolemy, which was written about the year 120, we learn that at that time Scotland was possessed by eighteen tribes more or less distinct, and that one of these, the Vernicomes, or Venicontes, occupied the eastern half of Fife along with Angus and Mearns. They had one town named Orrea, the site of which is uncertain. Ptolemy places the river Tinna between the Forth and the Tay, in a position corresponding to that of the Eden. Of the tribe of the Horesti he makes no mention.<sup>2</sup>

The Caledonian tribes,<sup>3</sup> including the Vernicomes of East Fife, are described by Tacitus and subsequent classical authors as a large-limbed, red-haired race. The tribes rarely combined for mutual defence. They had no walled towns, but lived in tents. They subsisted on flesh and milk, and the natural products of the soil; and did not practise tillage. Some of these statements, however, could only have been applicable to the most uncivilised parts of the country. There still exist in many places 'hut-circles,' or mounds slightly raised above the surrounding soil, indicating the foundations of fixed dwellings. These were constructed of wood, and were of a circular shape, with thatched roofs tapering to a point. They are sometimes found in groups, representing villages. If there were no walled

<sup>1</sup> N. S. A. *Leuchars*, 223; Small's *Rom. Antiq. in Fife*, 237.

<sup>2</sup> See Giles's *Hist. Arc. Britons*, ii. (*Historical Documents*), pp. 99, 100.

<sup>3</sup> The term *Caledonia* was applied by Roman writers to the country north of the Firths of Forth and Clyde. It was derived from the name of the leading tribe.



towns, there were numerous hill-forts. Various facts also show that tillage was practised in some parts of the country. The Caledonians, we are further told, ate no fish, though these could be procured in abundance. They were brave in war, and fought both on foot and from chariots drawn by small but swift horses. Their arms were a round target, a long pointless sword, and a dagger. On the water they made use of coracles, or boats covered with hides, such as are said to be still used in England on the Severn and the Wye. They had also canoes, made of the trunk of a large tree hollowed out; and many of these have been found in the beds and on the banks of the estuaries and rivers of Scotland. In the early part of the present century two were discovered in the bed of the Tay near Newburgh, one of them being 28 feet in length. In 1895 a canoe was found in the Tay opposite Errol, and presented by Mr. W. O. Dalglish of Errol Park to the Dundee Museum. It is 29 feet in length, 4 feet wide at the stern, and 2 feet wide at the bow. It has been formed of a single oak-tree, the stern only being a separate piece. The Caledonian tribes painted their bodies with woad, which gave them a greenish colour, and tattooed them with representations of animals—a practice which at one period had prevailed throughout the whole of Britain, but was afterwards confined to the ruder tribes situated north of the Firths of Forth and Clyde, who were for this reason, as some think, called by the Romans *Picti*, Picts or painted people, a name which first occurs in the year 296.<sup>1</sup> The Picts called themselves *Cruithnigh*, a word of similar meaning, and were akin to an Irish race of the same name.

The nationality and language of the Picts or Caledonians have been the subject of much controversy, only a few Pictish words having survived. It has been maintained by some that

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<sup>1</sup> See Excerpts from *Xiphilius's Abridgement of Dio*, and *Herodian* (Giles's *Hist. Ancient Britons*, vol. ii. (*Historical Documents*), pp. 112, 120).



they were a Teutonic people, and spoke a Teutonic or German language; by others that they spoke Cymric or Welsh. Most writers are now agreed that they formed a subdivision of the Gaelic branch of the Celtic race, and spoke a dialect of the Gaelic language; which, however, as used by the southern Picts, contained a British or Welsh element. For example, the name of the Ochil Hills is supposed to be derived from the Welsh word *uchel*, high; whereas the corresponding Gaelic word is *uasal*. Professor Rhys denies the Celtic nationality of the Picts, and maintains that they were a remnant of the non-Aryan race who occupied Britain before the arrival of the Celts, and that they spoke a language which was not Celtic.<sup>1</sup> Those who hold that the Picts were Celts allow that certain non-Celtic words which their language contained must have been derived from the people who preceded and became amalgamated with them.

The religion of the Caledonian tribes, including those of Fife, is but imperfectly known. Their priests were called Druids, as were those of the Celtic people of South Britain and of Gaul. The Druids held that the soul of man is immortal, and migrates from one person at his death to another. They venerated the oak and the mistletoe, and performed their religious rites in groves of oak-trees. They sought to propitiate their gods by human sacrifices, and on great occasions by filling huge images made of wicker-work with living human beings, and then consuming them by fire. An Arch-Druid presided over the whole body. A system possessing such an organised hierarchy, and sanctioning customs so hideous, prevailed, according to Cæsar and other classical authors,<sup>2</sup> in Gaul and South Britain; but evidence is wanting that it was practised by the tribes of Caledonia, though Tacitus tells us that these ratified a con-

<sup>1</sup> Rhys in *Celtic Britain*, 274; also in *Scottish Review* for 1891, and *Proc. Soc. Antiq. (Scot.)*, vol. xxvi. 305.

<sup>2</sup> See Excerpts from *Cæsar*, *Diodorus Siculus*, *Strabo*, and *Pliny* in Giles's *Hist. Anc. Brit.*, vol. ii. (*Hist. Doc.*).





federacy, which they had formed to resist Agricola's invasion of their country, by 'assemblies and sacrifices,' without stating of what these sacrifices consisted.<sup>1</sup> Yet it is certain that there were priests called Druids both amongst the Caledonian and Irish Celts. They opposed the missionary work of St. Columba at the court of Brude, the sovereign of Pictland in the sixth century, as they had previously opposed that of St. Patrick in Ireland. They did not worship personal gods, but deified the elements and objects of nature. Demons were supposed to dwell in the heavenly bodies, the wind, and the clouds; in fountains, rivers, and hills; and through these to inflict injury on men. The Druids pretended, and were believed, to be able, by magical charms and incantations, to excite such beings to hostile activity for the punishment of their enemies. Fairies—creatures diminutive, trickish, and sometimes malignant—were believed to dwell in caves and the hollows of mountains, and were spoken of respectfully through fear of their powers for mischief. Christian missionaries in later times, unable altogether to rid the minds of the people, and sometimes their own minds, of pagan superstitions, endeavoured to bring some of these into the service of Christianity by dedicating to saints the objects of popular reverence. Fountains, in particular, were thus dedicated; for which reason, as well as from their being used by the early evangelists for the baptism of their converts, they were held sacred in Christian, and even down to recent times.

Among other customs of the pagan Celts may be mentioned two annual festivals, which in some parts of the country held their ground till the present century. One of these was observed on the first day of May as the beginning of summer, when fires were kindled on the hill-tops in honour of the sun. This festival was called Beltane. To wash the face with May dew is a custom not yet quite extinct. The other festival was

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<sup>1</sup> *Vit. Agric.*, c. 27.



called Samhain, and was held on the first day of November as the beginning of winter, when the fires in every dwelling were extinguished, that they might be relighted from the sacred fire which was then kindled. Its Christian representative was Hallowmas, the eve of which—that is, the evening preceding it—is still known as Hallow E'en.

Ancient stone-circles and dolmens are popularly regarded as connected with the rites of the Druids—the former as being their temples, and the latter the altars on which they sacrificed their human victims. There is, however, no proof that those hoary memorials of the past were connected with Druidism, or *in their origin* were anything else than sepulchral monuments; though in later times they may have been used as places of assembly, or for the practice of religious rites. The opinion that they were Druidical is comparatively modern. Similar erections are found in countries which are not known to have ever contained either Celts or Druids.



## CHAPTER III

### CELTIC MISSIONARIES AND MONASTERIES

'The tidings come of Jesus crucified ;  
'They come—they spread—the weak, the suffering hear,  
Receive the faith, and in the hope abide.'

—WORDSWORTH.

At what period or by whose agency the inhabitants of Fife, and of its northern parts in particular, were converted from heathenism cannot be determined with certainty; but the labours of early evangelists, and the establishment of monasteries within this district, or near to it, may be briefly noticed as suggesting probable answers to these questions.

In the year 397 St. Ninian built his white house, or stone church, called Candida Casa, now Whithorn, in Galloway, with which a monastery was connected. Bede informs us that by the preaching of Ninian the southern Picts—that is, the inhabitants of the country between the Forth and the Grampians—'forsook the error of idolatry and embraced the true faith.'<sup>1</sup> As Fife formed an important part of this region, Ninian may have been its first evangelist. There was before the Reformation a chapel in the Constabulary of Kinghorn dedicated to him; but as the time of its dedication is unknown, it cannot with certainty be affirmed that Fife contains any memorial of his labours of undoubted proximity to his age. It appears that the effects of Ninian's preaching were not permanent, and that there was afterwards a general relapse of the southern Picts into paganism.

Subsequent to Ninian's time a monastery was founded at

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<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Eccles. Angl.*, lib. iii. c. iv. (ed. Stevenson, p. 162).



Abernethy, and another at St. Andrews—the former about twelve miles west of Balmerino, and the latter about the same distance south-east of it; and as about two-thirds of this parish as at present bounded appears to have been connected with the first of these institutions, and the remainder of it with the other, it will be proper to give here some account of their foundation, as well as of the rise of monasticism in the Church, a system whose growth and decay will occupy much of our attention later on.

A monk (*monachos*) is one who seeks solitude, and the meaning of the word indicates the origin of monachism, which has established itself in various systems of religion besides Christianity. In primitive times Christians were often compelled by persecution to retire into caves and deserts for safety, or chose to do so that they might not be tempted to apostasy. When the fury of their persecutors abated they did not always return to the world, but often preferred to continue in their retreats, spending their time in devotion and labour. Moreover, men and women often chose this mode of life without any such necessity, acting on the erroneous idea that thus escaping the snares of the world they could cultivate a purer piety than was otherwise attainable. At first each recluse lived in his own solitary retreat, some practising the most severe mortifications; but gradually they began to form communities, and to bind themselves by the most stringent vows. It was in Egypt this system was first extensively adopted, after the example of the celebrated Antony, who may be regarded as the founder of Christian monachism. From Egypt it was brought in the year 341 by Athanasius to Rome, where it rapidly spread. Thence it reached Gaul, where Martin of Tours founded monasteries. From Gaul it was carried to Wales and to Whithorn, and thence to Ireland. Numerous monasteries were afterwards founded in Scotland by Irish missionaries, and especially by Columba and his disciples.

The monastery of Abernethy, according to the Pictish





Chronicle, was founded by King Nectan Morbet, son of Erip, Irb, or Wirp, in the fifth year of his reign. The statement in the Chronicle is, that he gave Abernethy to God and St. Brigid 'till the day of judgment'—the boundaries of the lands so granted being defined—and that the grant was made in presence of Darlugdach, Abbess of Kildare, who had come from Ireland two years before, and now 'sang hallelujah over that offering.' The reason why the grant was given was, that when Nectan had been expelled to Ireland by his brother Drust, he had asked St. Brigid to pray to God for him; and that she, having done so, assured him that if he would return to his own country God would put him in peaceable possession of the kingdom. But as St. Brigid or Bride—the 'Mary of Ireland'—is said to have died in the year 523 or 525, and Nectan is supposed to have reigned from 457 to 481, Darlugdach, who was Brigid's successor at Kildare, could not have come to Abernethy during his lifetime, and therefore this account cannot be true in all its details. The limits of Nectan's reign, however, are a matter of conjecture rather than of certainty.<sup>1</sup>

Bower, the continuator of Fordun's Chronicle, states that it was King Garnard, the successor of Brude the convert and friend of Columba, who founded the church of Abernethy, and that he gave to St. Brigid 'all the lands and tithes which the prior and canons'—who existed there when Bower wrote—'have from ancient times.'<sup>2</sup> This act of Garnard appears to have taken place between 584 and 594. The true account of the matter probably is, that Nectan in the fifth century founded and endowed a monastery at Abernethy, which either at first or afterwards was connected with St. Brigid's nunnery at Kildare, that it fell into decay, and that King Garnard towards the end of the sixth century restored and re-endowed it, constituting it a monastery for monks, and dedicating

<sup>1</sup> *Chronicle of the Picts and Scots*, p. 6; Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, i. 134 (2nd edition).

<sup>2</sup> *Scotichronicon*, ed. Goodall, lib. iv. c. 12 (vol. i. p. 188).



it, like the previous institution, to St. Brigid. In favour of the supposition that it was a second time endowed, is the fact that in the twelfth century, as we shall see, the abbacy possessed a territory much more extensive than that situated near Abernethy, said to have been given by Nectan; for this enlarged territory included the greater part of the lands now forming the parishes of Flisk and Balmerino.

The refounding of the monastery of Abernethy acquires additional interest from the circumstance that it appears to have been the result of the preaching of Columba long after he had been the means of converting Brude, the Pictish sovereign, and those of his subjects who dwelt beyond the Granipians. Though Brude's regal seat had been near Inverness, that of his successor Garnard, or Gartnaidh, was at Abernethy, which long continued to be the capital of Pictland. It is stated in an ancient document that Columba 'used to teach the tribes who were around Tai' (Tay), and that in this work he was aided by the influence or authority of the king.<sup>1</sup> It may therefore be inferred that the re-establishment of St. Brigid's monastery at the Pictish capital was effected at Columba's instance; and there appears nothing unlikely in the supposition that his field of labour at this period, which was near the close of his life, included the North of Fife bordering on the Tay, as a great part of this district was given to it, most probably by King Garnard, and at that time, as its endowment.

The Columban Church in its distinctive features, and especially in the organisation of its monasteries, was very similar to the Irish Church, of which it was an offshoot. In founding a monastery, whether in Ireland or in Scotland, Columba's usual method was first to obtain from the king, or from the chief of the tribe, a grant of land for its site and for the sustenance of its monks. Such a grant frequently included, as in the case of Abernethy, an extensive tract of country. He then proceeded to construct the necessary buildings, which were of a very

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<sup>1</sup> See Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, ii. 136.



humble description. They were most frequently formed of wattles, or wicker-work, and earth, like the 'creel-houses' which existed in some parts of the Highlands till the last century. The church, however, was usually constructed of oaken planks. Near it was placed a group of circular detached huts, each occupied by a single monk; a separate house for the Abbot, the refectory in which they ate their meals together, a guest-house, and other domestic buildings. The whole was surrounded by a circular rampart of earth, or of earth and stones, and a ditch. Celibacy was obligatory on every member of the brotherhood, and they had all things in common. They practised the anterior tonsure—the front of the head being shaven back to a line drawn from ear to ear—as distinguished from the Roman or coronal tonsure, on the crown of the head. In addition to their church services, the senior monks were chiefly employed in reading and writing, and especially in making copies of the Scriptures and other books for the use of their churches—a species of work in which Columba himself delighted and excelled. The juniors were occupied in agriculture and mechanical work necessary for supplying the wants of the monastery. The education of those who desired to join the brotherhood, and of the other young men of the tribe, was carefully attended to. Each monastery was ruled by its own Abbot; but all those founded by Columba or his disciples—of which the names of upwards of fifty have been preserved—were subject to himself and his successors as Abbots of the parent monastery of Iona. The doctrines taught by the Columban Church, though they were on several points not in accordance with Protestant tenets, and were associated with superstitious practices, were yet purer than those held at the same period in the Church of Rome; and its clergy were completely independent of that church. Such, we may reasonably believe, was the monastery of Abernethy, of whose territory Balmerino formed a part, and by whose monks, if not by Columba himself, it was most probably evangelised; for one special purpose of these



Celtic institutions was to serve as missionary colleges, where the monks were to be trained, and from which they were to be sent forth to preach the Gospel, and administer the sacraments, to the inhabitants of the surrounding districts. It was in this way the people were brought permanently under the power of the Christian faith while as yet there were no clergy other than monks.

As regards the other Celtic monastery with which a portion of the present parish of Balmerino appears to have been connected—that of St. Andrews—a Christian settlement at that place first comes into notice in connection also with the preaching of Columba. Its founder, Cainnech, or Kenneth, of Acha-boe, from whom Kilkenny derives its name, was, like Columba himself, an Irishman, and being of Pictish race, had been associated with him in his earlier mission to the Pictish King Brude at Inverness, and now appears acting in conjunction with him in preaching to the southern Picts. Cainnech's monastery at St. Andrews seems to have been of the nature of a retreat or hermitage.<sup>1</sup>

Another account of the foundation of a Christian settlement at St. Andrews connects it with St. Regulus or Rule, and assigns it to the fourth century. There are several forms of the legend. Only its outlines can be here given.

In the year 345 Regulus, Bishop of Patras, in Greece, where the Apostle Andrew is said to have suffered martyrdom, is commanded by an angel to go to a sarcophagus containing the bones of St. Andrew, and to take from it three fingers of his right hand, an arm-bone, a knee-cap, and a tooth; to sail forth with these relics, and in whatever place his vessel should be wrecked, to build a church in honour of the Apostle. He and his companions accordingly set sail, and, after enduring many hardships, arrive at the territory of the Picts, and are wrecked at a place called Muckcross, afterwards Kilrymont, and now St. Andrews. They subsequently journey to various

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<sup>1</sup> Reeves's *Culdees of the British Islands* (Trans. R. I. A., vol. xxiv. part ii.), p. 151; *Celtic Scotland*, ii. 137.





places, carrying with them the relics which they have saved from shipwreck. King Hungus, while returning from a hostile expedition to Argyll, meets them, and accompanies them back to Kilrymont, after he has erected a church in honour of the Apostle at each of the places they have visited.<sup>1</sup> The king then gives Kilrymont to God and St. Andrew for the erection of churches and oratories, and, along with Regulus and the others, walks round it seven times, Regulus carrying on his head the relics of St. Andrew, his companions chanting hymns, and Hungus and the magnates of the whole kingdom following on foot. They then erect around the place twelve stone crosses. King Hungus afterwards gives to the church of St. Andrew, for a *parochia*, the whole territory between the sea called Ishundenema and the sea called Sletheuma, and in the adjacent province, bounded by a line drawn from Largo to Ceres, and from Ceres to 'Hyhatnoughten Machehirb, which land is now called Hadnachtén.' Hungus then confers on Kilrymont freedom from all secular exactions, and, as a symbol of this privilege, takes a turf and offers it on the altar of St. Andrew. Afterwards seven churches are built at Kilrymont,<sup>2</sup> the first of them being in honour of St. Regulus. This part of the legend ends with these words: 'Thana, son of Duda-brach, wrote this memorial for King Pherath, son of Bergeth, in the town of Migdale' (Meigle)—a place of importance in Pictish times. Pherath is supposed to be the king elsewhere

<sup>1</sup> The editor of Sibbald's *History of Fife and Kinross* interprets that author as asserting that one of the churches said to have been founded by Regulus was at Naughton, which he identifies with the place called Chondrochedalvan, visited by Regulus; and from this source has been derived the statement contained in several works, that there was anciently an establishment of 'Culdees' at Naughton. But Dr. Adamson is here in error, having been misled by Sibbald's carelessness of style and punctuation, and overlooking that author's statement made elsewhere, that it is not known where Chondrochedalvan stood. (See Adamson's edition of Sibbald, pp. 36, 164, Cupar-Fife, 1803.) Chondrochedalvan was Kindrochet, in Braemar.

<sup>2</sup> This was a frequent practice in the Irish Church. There were seven churches at Glendalough, and seven at Cashel. (See Warren's *Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church*, p. 48.)



called Wrad, son of Bargoit, who, according to the Pictish Chronicle, reigned from 840 to 843.<sup>1</sup>

The first portion of this legend, which narrates the bringing of the relics of St. Andrew to Kilrymont in the fourth century, is plainly fabulous; but from the circumstantial manner in which the latter part is told, it evidently rests on a basis of facts. There was a Pictish king named Angus or Hungus, who reigned from 731 to 761, and another of the same name from 820 to 832. It was more probably the former who is mentioned in the legend; and if so, the events described took place in the year 736. Skene, in his analysis of the legend, arrives at the conclusion that the relics—real or supposed—of St. Andrew may have been brought to Muckcross—under the impulse of the intense veneration felt in ancient times for such memorials of saints and martyrs—by Acca, Bishop of Hexham, who had previously brought relics of the same Apostle to that place from the Continent, and who, on being driven from his see in 732, took refuge amongst the Picts. He supposes Regulus to have been really an Irishman named Riagail, a contemporary and follower of Columba, with whose labours among the tribes around the Tay he may have been connected towards the end of the sixth century, when Cainnech had his hermitage at Muckcross. The supposition is a probable one, notwithstanding the want of positive evidence of Riagail's presence at St. Andrews. A cave—of which only a part now remains—described by Sir Walter Scott as nearly round, about 10 feet in diameter, the same in height, having on one side a stone altar, on the other an aperture leading into an inner apartment, and situated in the face of the cliffs at St. Andrews, was, according to tradition, the retreat

‘ Where good Saint Rule his holy lay  
From midnight to the dawn of day  
Sung to the billows’ sound.’<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Chron. Picts and Scots*, pp. 138, 185–188, 375.

<sup>2</sup> See Sir W. Scott's Notes to *Marmion*, Canto First.



From the fact that Regulus is called in one form of the legend an abbot, as well as from the very prominent part assigned to him in the proceedings, we may infer that Caimnech's hermitage or monastery having been probably of small extent and of brief duration, the former did found a monastic establishment there of a more important and permanent character. In the year 717 the Columban monks had been driven out of Pictland by King Nectan, son of Derili, and had taken refuge beyond Drumalban—the boundary line between the Picts and the Scottish kingdom of Dalriada or Argyll—because they had refused to comply with Nectan's decree, that they should conform to the Roman usage in regard to the form of tonsure and the time of observing Easter. To supply their places, secular clergy, who had on these points conformed to Rome, had been introduced from Ireland and England. Nectan and these clergy brought in the veneration of St. Peter, who thus became the patron saint of Pictland. What Hungus now did was probably to introduce a new supply of secular clergy, and to refund and greatly increase the endowment of the church of Regulus, at the same time dedicating it to St. Andrew on the occasion of his supposed relics being brought thither. In this way that Apostle was made to supersede St. Peter as patron saint of the kingdom; and a real incident of the eighth century was, by the authors of the legend, associated with the name of St. Regulus, and put back to the fourth century, in order to give to St. Andrews, when it had become the chief seat of the Scottish Church, precedence over Iona.<sup>1</sup>

As regards Naughton, we may believe that it was included in the district placed under the charge of the clergy of St. Andrews about the year 736; but its name of Hyhatnouhten Machehirb, that is, Hy-ard-Nachten Mac Irb—afterwards shortened into Ardnachtan, and then into Nachtan—appears to

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<sup>1</sup> See Reeves's *British Culdees* (Trans. R. I. A., vol. xxiv. part ii.), p. 152; and Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, ii. 267, 272.



indicate that at a much earlier period it had been made a stronghold or *dun*—for which by its position it was admirably fitted—by the same Pictish king Nectan, son of Erip, Irb, or Wirp, who founded Abernethy in the fifth century.<sup>1</sup> Its original name, of royal origin, can thus be traced back to an earlier period than that of any other place in Fife.

There are probable indications of the labours of other early evangelists in the North of Fife. The church of Forgan is said to have been dedicated to St. Fillan. This may possibly have been Fillan named ‘the leper,’ an Irishman who was connected with Rath Erran, that is, the fort of the Earn, or Dundurn, at the east end of Loch Earn, where his name is preserved in that of the village of St. Fillan’s. He lived about the end of the fifth century, and the church of Aberdour, in Fife, was dedicated to him. But St. Fillan of Forgan was more probably another Irishman who was nearly contemporary with Adannan, Abbot of Iona, and biographer of St. Columba, about the beginning of the eighth century. He founded the Abbey of Glendochart, and Strathfillan derives its name from him. In a cave at Pittenweem was St. Fillan’s Well, which seems to indicate his presence in the East of Fife.<sup>2</sup>

St. Servanus, or Serf, was connected with Fife. One account assigns him to the fifth century, and makes him the teacher of Kentigern, the apostle of Strathclyde.<sup>3</sup> But another Life of St. Serf places him with much more probability in the eighth century. According to this account, King Brude, son of Dargart, gave to him Culross, where he founded a church. He also founded a monastery on an island given him by the same king, and now called by the saint’s name, in Lochleven. After

<sup>1</sup> Some of the lists of the Pictish kings place a Nectan, son of Irb, as the successor of Gartnaidh in the beginning of the seventh century, and ascribe to him the founding of Abernethy; but Gartnaidh was really succeeded by Nectan, grandson of Uerd, who is thus confounded with the older Nectan. (See Skene’s *Celtic Scotland*, i. 235.)

<sup>2</sup> See *Celtic Scotland*, ii. 33, 175, 406.

<sup>3</sup> Joceline’s *Life of Kentigern* (‘Historians of Scotland,’ v.), p. 168.





remaining there seven years he travelled throughout all Fife erecting churches. He died at Dunning, in Perthshire. The church of Creich was dedicated to him, and he may have been its founder.<sup>1</sup>

St. Adrian also appears to have laboured in the North of Fife. According to the legend, he was a Hungarian, who, with a great company of clerics and others, came to Pictland to preach the Gospel. They abode first at Caiplie, in the parish of Kilrenny. Here there still exists a cave with 'many small crosses rudely incised on its walls; while over the cave, and entering from it by steps cut in the rock, there was till lately a little chamber, with a bench on its inner side cut in the rock, both of which have been traditionally associated with St. Adrian as his oratory and abode.'<sup>2</sup> Some of the company afterwards settled on the Isle of May, where they probably lived as hermits, and others, according to Wynton, in places north of the Forth, that is, throughout Fife. In the May, St. Adrian and many of them were martyred by the heathen Danes in the year 875.<sup>3</sup> Adrian and his companions appear to have been in reality Scots from Ireland. 'His true name of a Scot,' says Skene, 'was probably Odran, as the name of the patron saint always enters largely into those of the clergy of the place, with the usual prefix Gilla, or Maol; and we find a subsequent bishop of St. Andrews called Magilla Odran, son of the servant of Odran.'<sup>4</sup> Odran, or Adrian, is believed to be identical with Macidrin, corrupted into Magridan, and formed by adding the prefix *mo*, that is, 'my,' a term of endearment, to Odran, with the addition of an intermediate letter for the sake of euphony. The church of Flisk and that of Lindores, now Abdie, were dedicated to St. Magridin; and the same name was on Macduff's cross near Newburgh. In close connection with St. Adrian was

<sup>1</sup> *Chron. P. and S.*, lix. 412; *Celtic Scotland*, ii. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Stuart's *Rec. of Isle of May*, p. v.

<sup>3</sup> *Chron. P. and S.*, 425; Wynton's *Chronicle*, ed. 1872, vol. ii. 85, 86.

<sup>4</sup> *Proc. Soc. Antiq. (Scot.)*, iv. 316, 318.



Mucolinus of Flisk, who appears to have been another saint who came to Scotland from Ireland.<sup>1</sup> On Fliskmillan farm, in the parish of Flisk, there is the seat of St. Muggin, a modern abbreviation of Magridin. A church near Dron, called Exmagirdle, a corruption of Ecclesmagidrin, or the Church of Magidrin, was dedicated to him. The fact of his commemoration in so many places in the same district can be accounted for only by the supposition that this formed a special field of his labour, or of that of his disciples.

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<sup>1</sup> See Forbes's *Kalendars of Scottish Saints*, pp. 268, 379, 414.



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## CHAPTER IV

### SCOTS, DANES, ANGLO-SAXONS, AND NORMANS

‘ The Danish raven, lured by annual prey,  
Hung o’er the land incessant. Fleet on fleet  
Of barbarous pirates unremitting tore  
The miserable coast.’

‘ Deep-blooming, strong,  
And yellow-haired, the blue-eyed Saxon came.’

—THOMSON.

DURING a period of thirty years in the latter half of the seventh century, Fife, like the Lothians for a much greater length of time, may be said to have formed a part of England. Between 654 and 657 Oswy, King of the Angles of Northumbria, whose dominion extended to the Firth of Forth, subjugated the Pictish province of Fife, and incorporated it with his kingdom. In the year 670, when Oswy was succeeded by his son Egfrid, an unsuccessful effort was made by the southern Picts, aided by the free tribes of the north, to throw off the Anglic yoke. Fifteen years afterwards Bridei, or Bruidi, the Pictish sovereign, having advanced from the north and joined his forces with those of the Scots, Egfrid, who was his cousin, led an army into Pictland, in order to crush him and ravage the country. Bede informs us that while the enemy feigned retreat, Egfrid was drawn into the narrow passes of ‘inaccessible mountains,’ and was slain with the greatest part of his forces. By this decisive victory, which was gained on the 20th of May 685, the Picts, Britons, and Scots recovered their independence. ‘It is held by some,’ says Hill Burton, ‘to have permanently severed the country between the Tay and the Forth from the



influences that would have made it a part of England.'<sup>1</sup> Though, strange to say, it has been almost forgotten in modern times, it was the precursor of another victory very similar, both in its main circumstances and results, which was to be achieved after the lapse of centuries on the field of Bannockburn.

This great conflict is called by different chroniclers the battle of Lin Garan, of Dun Nechtan, and of Nechtan's Mere. Of Lin Garan nothing appears to be known. Hill Burton, Skene, and other historians have identified Dun Nechtan with Dunnichen, in Forfarshire—where are remains of a fort or camp—and Nechtan's Mere with a swamp near it called the Mire of Dunnichen, now drained, in the neighbourhood of which many stone coffins have been found. Some, however, have supposed that the site of the battle was at Ardnachten, now Naughton, in Balmerino parish, and several circumstances might be adduced in favour of this opinion.<sup>2</sup> There is reason to believe that both on the north and south sides of Naughton there was in ancient times a mire or swamp, though the ground has long been drained.<sup>3</sup> If the heights and rocky precipices at Naughton cannot be said to be, in the words of Bede, inaccessible mountains, neither can the hills at Dunnichen be correctly so described. Either in the valley on the south side of Naughton, or in the deeper and narrower pass on the north, between Hay's Hill and its continuation eastwards on the one side, and the ridge on which the present mansion and the ruins of the old castle stand on the other, a military force drawn thither by an enemy feigning retreat might have been easily cut off. And if tradition and the discovery of stone coffins at Dunnichen be taken as proofs that a battle was fought there, these and other indications of some conflict exist, as

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<sup>1</sup> Bede's *Hist. Eccles. Angl.*, lib. iv. c. 26; Burton's *Hist. Scot.*, i. 283 (ed. 1873); *Celtic Scotland*, i. 266.

<sup>2</sup> See Leighton's *Hist. Fife*, ii. 77.

<sup>3</sup> Other castles in the district were in olden times partially surrounded by a marsh or sheet of water for defence—namely, those of Newton, Leuchars, Cairnie or Lord's Cairnie, Creich, and perhaps Kinneir.





we have seen, in the neighbourhood of Naughton also. The strongest argument in favour of Dunnichen being the scene of the battle of Dun Nechtan, is derived from the close resemblance of the one name to the other. There is no evidence that Ardnachten was ever called Dun Nechtan, though, as has been already remarked, there was probably a fort or *dun* at the period referred to, and long before it, on the height where the castle of Naughton was afterwards erected. It is another curious coincidence—though unconnected with the question discussed — that both places appear to have acquired their names from the same Pictish king, Nectan, son of Erip or Irb.

The union of the Pictish and Scottish kingdoms about the middle of the ninth century was followed by an extensive migration of Scots from Argyll into South Pietland, and especially into Fife, which became the chief province of Alban, or Scotia, as the united kingdom came afterwards to be called. As the Pictish people of Fife at that period certainly spoke a dialect of the Gaelic language of the Scots, the amalgamation of these two branches of the same race would thereby be facilitated. The Scots, being the more civilised as well as the governing branch, more and more predominated; and the Picts eventually disappeared from history as a separate people.

Soon after the middle of the ninth century the Danes, who frequently ravished the shores of the British Isles, entered Pietland, probably by the Firth of Tay, and laid waste the country as far inland as Cluanan (Clunie, in Stormount) and Dunkeld. The erection of the Round Tower of Abernethy may be assigned to this period, though it is believed that its upper portion, which is built of stones of a different kind from those used in the lower courses, and has Norman characteristics in its four windows near the top, was subsequently rebuilt. Like the Irish Round Towers, from which it as well as the similar Tower of Brechin of later origin was copied, it must have been intended to serve as a bell-tower, but also, and still more, as a place of



security for ecclesiastical utensils, books, and other valuables, as well as for the clerics themselves, against the attacks of the Danes, to whom monasteries were favourite objects of pillage. It is believed that about the same period, and for the same reason, was commenced the practice of building churches of stone instead of wood in places exposed to such attacks. In 877. the Danes, advancing from the west coast, overran the country as far as Dollar, where they gave battle to 'the men of Alban,' and defeated them. They then pursued and slaughtered them through Fife, and gained another victory over them at Inverdufatha or Inbhirdubhroda,<sup>1</sup> now Inverdoval, in the parish of Forgan. The carnage was great, and among the slain was Constantine, King of the Picts—as the sovereigns of the united kingdom were still called—who died, according to an old chronicle,

‘ On Thursday in pools of blood,  
On the shore of Inbhirdubhroda,’

and was buried in Iona. In some of the accounts of this disaster, however, the assailants are called not Danes, but Norwegians. The Pictish Chronicle states that 'the Scots'—that is, the retreating natives—were slain at Ach Cochlam, which Skene supposes to have been Kathlok or Cathlok, now Kedlock, in the parish of Logie. If this conjecture be correct, a conflict must have taken place there also.<sup>2</sup> There is a tradition that King Constantin was captured and put to death in a cave at Fifeness, which must be erroneous, as there is no doubt he was killed in battle at a place whose name began with *Inbhir* or *Inver*.<sup>3</sup> A stone cairn mentioned in the Register of St.

<sup>1</sup> These Gaelic names signify the *Inver of the black ford*, and of the *black road* (Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, i. 327-8). *Inver* means the mouth of a river, or the confluence of two waters or streams.

<sup>2</sup> *Chron. Picts and Scots*, 86, 8.

<sup>3</sup> 'By another chronicle,' says Skene, 'the word is corrupted to "de Werdofatha," and supposing that "Wer" was meant for "Wem," a cave, the *Chronicum Elegiacum* translates it *Nigra specus* (a black cave), and from this the story that King Constantin was killed in a cave seems to have arisen' (*Celtic Scotland*, i. 327-8).



Andrews Priory, as situated 'near the road from Inverdoveth towards St. Andrews,' was probably a memorial of the battle; but Jervise's suggestion that this may have been the cairn already referred to as having existed till recently on the heights south of Northfield farm-steading, appears improbable from the position as indicated on the map of the Ordnance Survey.<sup>1</sup> The camp near St. Fort, already noticed, commonly called the 'Danes' Camp,' may have been connected with the battle of Inverdovat, though the account of the pursuit of the Scots by the Danes after their defeat at Dollar gives the impression that it was of too rapid a character to permit of the construction by either army of a work of defence of so substantial a kind.

About eighty years ago a family named Henderson, claiming to be descended from a Dane, who, being wounded in one of their incursions, remained behind when the Danes retreated, left the parish of Forgan, where they asserted their ancestors had lived for eight hundred years. It was said that the family, whithersoever they removed, always carried the same head-stone of their doorway with them. This heirloom has disappeared. The late Rev. Mr. Blair of Ferry-port-on-Craig had in his possession a sword which was said to have been handed down in the above-mentioned family as that of their Danish ancestor. The family of the late Mr. John Henderson, farmer at Gauldry, and afterwards at Cowbakie, claim to be descended from the same Dane. There is a tradition that the inhabitants of Tents Moor were descended from the crews of a Danish fleet that had been wrecked on the coast.

Towards the end of the tenth century the Danes are said to have appeared in the Tay with a fleet, but to have been defeated near Luncarty, in Perthshire, after a fierce battle, with heavy loss on both sides. Tradition asserts that during their retreat they were attacked and again defeated by the Scots on the elevated field in Balmerino parish, called Battle Law, and

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. Soc. Antiq. (Scot.)*, vi. 392.



compelled to take refuge in their ships. The tradition is supposed to be confirmed by the cairns recently existing on this field, which were found to contain human bones; and by the stone coffins, bones, and pieces of broken swords which were discovered near it. To the same event have been referred the stone coffins and cairns found at the east end of the village of Gauldry and at Peashills, with their contents, as well as the gold ornaments found at the latter place, as already described. The forts also on Norman's Law and on the chain of heights extending eastwards from it, as well as several of the other ancient memorials previously mentioned, are popularly connected with the incursions of the Danes. Placed or found, as all of these objects were, so near the Tay, some of them are doubtless thus rightly accounted for. Such traditions can hardly be altogether destitute of some foundation. Yet they cannot be accepted as furnishing the true explanation of the whole of these memorials. That some great conflict took place on Battle Law is sufficiently proved by its name; but the cist and urn recently found there, and already noticed, belong to a period vastly more remote than the tenth or ninth century. As regards the battle of Luncarty in particular, such a conflict may have taken place, though this is denied by some recent historians. Neither Fordun nor Wynton mentions it. It makes its first appearance in the pages of Fordun's continuator, Bower, who wrote in the early part of the fifteenth century; and his account of it is incredible in some of its details. Hector Boece, a poor authority for a matter of fact, gives a highly picturesque but quite different description of the conflict; and with him originated the well-known story of the tide of battle having been turned by a countryman and his two sons with their yokes, and of these worthies becoming, in consequence of their prowess, the founders of the noble family of the Hays of Errol.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Boethius (or Boece), *Scot. Hist.*, fol. 229 (Parisiis, 1574); and Bellenden's translation (1821), ii. 217; *Scotichron.*, ii. 99 (1759); Burton, *Hist. Scot.*, i. 338 (2nd ed.); Robertson's *Scotland under her Early Kings*, i. 90.





That Norman's Law must have derived its present name from some incident connected with the ravages of the Northmen, or Norwegians, may be true enough, though it could scarcely be so called while the language of the district was Gaelic. Its older name, however, was Dundemor, or Dunmore ('the great fortress'), which indicates that it may have been a Celtic stronghold long before the Norwegian or Danish invasions. As the readiest way of accounting for the existence of such ancient memorials, they are frequently assigned to some well-known event in history, with which they may have had no connection. This remark holds true especially of sepulchral memorials, which are commonly referred to the invasions of the Romans or Danes, as if no Pict or Scot died a natural death, or was ever commemorated unless he fell in battle. Some of the ancient forts also may be of Celtic rather than of Danish origin, and much older than the period of the Danish inroads. The native tribes had internal as well as foreign foes to resist; and it may be presumed that those who occupied the country during so many ages would leave more numerous traces of their presence than would mark the hasty incursions of strangers from beyond the sea.

A great influx of foreigners into Scotland, and especially into Fife, commenced in the eleventh and continued till the thirteenth century. They were mostly Saxons from England, some of whom had settled north of the Forth before the Norman conquest of that country. These were followed by multitudes who fled northwards in order to escape the severity of the Conqueror; while others had been induced to come to Scotland by the circumstance that the Saxon princess, Margaret, sister of Edgar Atheling, had been married to the Scottish sovereign, Malcolm Ceanmor. The immigration of Margaret's countrymen was also encouraged by her sons, Edgar and Alexander I., during their successive reigns. Many of the Saxon immigrants were of the rank of barons. King David I. also brought Norman barons into Fife. Both classes of magnates



received from these sovereigns and their immediate successors extensive grants of land, on which they settled their retainers who accompanied them. Others acquired large estates by marrying Celtic heiresses. The royal burghs, which were then coming into existence, were at the same time being filled with Saxon and Flemish merchants. A prominent result of this great influx of foreigners was the gradual substitution of the English language for Gaelic in the lowland districts north of the Forth, and for British or Welsh in the kingdom of Strathclyde; just as English had been introduced many centuries earlier in the territory south of the Forth, when that district was conquered by the Angles of Northumbria and made part of their kingdom. Gaelic continued to be spoken in Fife down to the twelfth century at least. When the Scottish clergy assembled in a council at St. Andrews, in the year 1074, under King Malcolm Ceanmor and Queen Margaret, they could not understand the English language of the Queen, who was the chief speaker; and the King, who spoke both Gaelic and English, had to act as interpreter between them.<sup>1</sup> All the oldest names of places in the parish of Balmerino, as well as in the adjoining district, are Gaelic words, and must have originated prior to the twelfth century.<sup>2</sup> In every part of the Lowlands also, no less than in the Highlands, the oldest place-names are of Gaelic derivation. But in the chartularies of the Abbeys of Balmerino and Lindores, and of the Priory of St. Andrews, we find illustrations of the change of language which was taking place in the North of Fife during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In these records appear such place-names as Newton, Swan Mire, Aldan's Well, Langside, which are English, as of course all the names of later origin

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<sup>1</sup> Turgot's *Life of Queen Margaret*, in Pinkerton's *Lives of Scot. Saints* (Metcalf's ed.), ii. 168.

<sup>2</sup> Such as Balmurynach itself, Ballindean, Ballindard, Ardint, Corbie, Cultrach, Balgove, Pitmossie, Kilburns, Flisk, Balhelvie, Logie, Ballinbreich, Lindores, Kinnaird, Dunbolg, Kinsleith, Colluthie, Creich, Drumnod, Starr, Rathillet, Kilmany, Kinneir, Leuchars, Inverclovat.



are English. Some have attempted to explain the disappearance of Gaelic from the districts north of the Forth by the supposition that the Celtic population were by these crowds of foreigners driven into the Highlands, where their language is still spoken. But there is no evidence of such displacement of the ancient inhabitants: it is in itself improbable; and the ultimate extinction of Gaelic in the Lowlands can be otherwise accounted for. The urban population being for the most part of southern origin, their Saxon speech would gradually spread into the rural districts, in which also many of the strangers had settled; and the change of language would be brought about by a process similar to, though more rapid than, that which in our own day is introducing the English tongue into every district of the Highlands, and is destined at no remote period to extinguish Gaelic there also, even among the people of Celtic blood.

‘Mark ! how all things swerve  
From their known course, or vanish like a dream ;  
Another language spreads from coast to coast ;  
Only perchance some melancholy Stream,  
And some indignant Hills old names preserve,  
When laws, and creeds, and people all are lost !’

The influx of a foreign race led also to the ultimate extinction of the Celtic institutions which existed in Fife as elsewhere. The changes thus produced, being in their relation to this district important and interesting, claim a brief notice here.

Pictland had been divided into seven provinces, which, according to the legendary account of the origin of the Picts, were respectively occupied by and named after the seven sons of Cruidne or Cruithne, the progenitor of the race. His eldest son was Fib, and from him Fife is said to have derived its name. Each of these provinces was inhabited by several tribes, and each tribe or *tuath* was supposed to be descended from a common ancestor. Its head was called the *Toshach*. The



tribes of each province constituted together a *Mortuath* or Great Tribe, whose head was termed the *Mormaer*, or Great Steward. The land occupied by each tribe had been at first held as its common property. When agriculture came to be practised, the arable land was annually divided among the free members of the tribe, so that each had a part allotted to him proportioned to the number of cattle he possessed, as well as a dwelling in one of the townships. As the more enterprising and industrious would increase their stock, and thus get a larger share of the arable land, the amount to be divided among the less prosperous would thereby become smaller. The remainder of the land which was not arable formed the common pasture ground. The inconvenience attending the annual change of the members' allotments led first to a more lengthened, and eventually to a permanent retention of them; and thus there came into existence the right of private property in the tribe land. The wealthier members of the tribe, becoming in course of time extensive landholders, gave the use of a portion both of their land and stock to the poorer members, who were willing thus to become their dependents and tenants, in return for rent and various personal services. The tribe included also a class of persons who, by conquest or other causes, were in a state of serfdom, and did not share in the rights of freemen. The township was called *Baile*, which in the forms *Bal* and *Ballin* appears in many place-names, as—in this district—Balmerino, Balgove, Ballindean, Balhelvie, Ballinbreich. The homestead was frequently termed *Pette*, *Pet*, or *Pit*, the last of which names is also of common occurrence, as in Pitmossie in the parish of Balmerino, and in Pitauchop, Pitbladdo, Pitlethy, and Piteullo in neighbouring parishes. *Bal* and *Pit* had often the same meaning.<sup>1</sup>

This tribal organisation was gradually assimilated to Saxon customs. The Mormaers of the seven provinces now appeared

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<sup>1</sup> See Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, iii., chaps. iii., iv.





under the Saxon title of Earls; and among the seven Earls of Scotland the Earl of Fife held the chief place. In like manner the Toshach became the Saxon Thane, and the tribe territory a thanage. Hence it is evident that there could never have been a 'Thane of Fife.' Under the feudal system, which was introduced by King David I., the sovereign was regarded as the superior of the whole land of the kingdom, extensive tracts of which he granted to great lords—in many cases Saxons and Normans—who in turn bestowed portions of their territory on vassals; and these gave lesser portions to sub-vassals, to be held by the tenure of military service, which took the place of various burdens and duties which had been imposed under the tribe system.<sup>1</sup> The serfs of Celtic race remained on the soil, and became the *villains* of the feudal superior, liable to be transferred by sale or gift along with the lands which they cultivated. The process of bringing the whole land of the kingdom under the feudal system extended over several reigns, and during the transition period many thanages still survived. One part of a thanage consisted of the Thane's demesne or mensal lands, which were cultivated by his hereditary serfs and personal bondsmen. The remainder was held of him by different classes of free tenants and farmers, who paid rent and gave other services; and the same system prevailed in the feudal baronies. Thus the lands in Balmerino parish before the foundation of the Abbey were partly demesne and partly servile lands. In Fife, so much of the land had been the subject of feudal grants to Saxon and Norman immigrants, that only four thanages survived the War of Independence. One of these was Kinneir, in the parish of Kilmany, as may be inferred from the fact that, when it afterwards became a

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<sup>1</sup> These consisted of *cain*, or part of the produce of the land, and personal services, paid to the Toshach of the tribe as its Judge and Captain; *conweth*, or the duty of entertaining him when he passed through the territory; *feacht*, or the obligation to follow him in hostile expeditions; and *shuaged*, or the duty of serving the king in defence of the kingdom.—(*Celtic Scotland*, iii. 231-4.)



barony, its lands included the third part of Straburne, Fordell, and Fothers, which were still called 'Thane's lands.'<sup>1</sup> These doubtless formed the demesne lands of the Thane or Toshach of an ancient Celtic tribe, and would be cultivated by his serfs and bondsmen. The stronghold of the Thane of Kinneir would most probably be placed on the eminence rising out of the valley of the Motray at Easter Kinneir, where are still to be seen the remains of an edifice of later date, described in a charter of 1543 as 'the tower and fortalice of Kinneir,' and where the surname of Kinneir or Kinnear appears to have originated.

A Pictish Toshach had an officer who was the servitor of his court in executing his summonses, and was called the *Toshachdera*. The land attached to the office was termed the *Derach* or *Deray* lands. An instance occurs in the parish of Creich. A rent-roll of Lindores Abbey makes mention of the Derach land of Creich.<sup>2</sup> Its situation appears to be unknown, but the name is an interesting survival of the tribe system of Celtic times.

The immigration of Saxons and Normans led also to important ecclesiastical changes. Though the Columban monks had been expelled by King Nectan in 717, clergy of the same order appear to have been to some extent restored after the union of the Pictish and Scottish kingdoms. Yet the Celtic Church was from various causes now in a state of decadence. Its possessions had been to some extent secularised. The Danish and Norwegian invasions had proved specially disastrous to it. Its monasteries were by these Pagans despoiled;

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<sup>1</sup> In 1543 these lands are described as 'Thane's lands,' and as forming part of the barony of Kinneir. In 1372 Straburne and Fordell were in the barony of Leuchars; but as they were not then called Thane's lands, it was presumably some portion only of them which belonged to the latter barony. See *Abbreviate of Retours* (Fife) under 30th July 1543; Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, iii. ch. vii. and p. 268; *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. i. p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Alexander Laing's *Lindores Abbey*, p. 423; Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, iii. 281.



the discipline of the monks was relaxed, and in many cases they themselves were dispersed. The strict observance of monastic celibacy, which had been both the strength and the weakness of the Columban system, had produced a reaction, and the marriage of clerics had become general. Church benefices frequently descended from father to son, and the priesthood became in some degree a hereditary caste. Abbots ceased to take clerical orders, while retaining the revenues of the abbacy. Clerical duties were devolved on a small body of Culdees with their Prior, and sometimes on a single priest. These received only a portion of the endowments, while the larger share was appropriated by the Abbot as a lay magnate, as we shall find in the case of Abernethy, whose possessions included Balmerino. The Culdees, or *Keledei*, who existed at Abernethy and elsewhere, do not make their appearance in history till the eighth century. They were at first ascetics, living in communities, and probably originated in a reaction from the laxity of monastic observance. In their discipline they resembled secular canons—an intermediate class between monks and secular priests. In the twelfth century they are found at many of the old Columban seats. Some, if not most of them, were married men. Their societies were independent of Iona and of each other. In course of time they also fell away from their original strictness, and at length were chiefly characterised by worldliness and neglect of duty.

The Celtic Church, thus fallen into decrepitude, was by Queen Margaret and her sons, and especially by King David, gradually assimilated to the pattern of the Church of England, which was itself modelled on that of Rome. This transformation was effected chiefly by the introduction of diocesan episcopacy and the monastic Orders connected with the Roman Church, which had been imported into England from the Continent, and by the institution of parishes. Though there were bishops in the Columban Church, they had neither dioceses nor jurisdiction; and when there happened to be



one in a monastery, he was himself subject to the Abbot, even when the latter was only a presbyter. In the year 850 Kenneth MacAlpin, having brought from Iona to the monastery of Dunkeld, which had been founded in 815, Columba's relics, or some of them, thereby conferred on it supremacy over all the Columban monasteries. Dunkeld thus took the place of Iona, which had been repeatedly laid waste and its monks slaughtered or dispersed by the Danes. Kenneth at the same time constituted the Abbot of Dunkeld Bishop of Fortrenn, or the territory situated between the Tay and the Forth, now under his rule, which was an approximation to a diocese. The seat of this bishopric was afterwards removed to Abernethy, where there were three bishops in succession. About the beginning of the tenth century it was transferred to St. Andrews, and the bishop, who probably resided in the monastery of that place, was called the Bishop of the Scots, or of Alban. This system had continued for about two centuries, when Alexander I. appointed to the bishopric of St. Andrews Turgot, an Englishman. He also instituted two, and King David six additional bishoprics, the seats of most of which were connected with old Columban foundations. On these bishoprics, and on the religious Orders of the Church of Rome, were conferred what remained of the ancient endowments of the Celtic monasteries at the seats referred to. Alexander I. restored to the church of St. Andrews the territory called the Boar's Chace, which had been given to it by King Hungus, but had been subsequently secularised.<sup>1</sup> An Augustinian Priory was founded at St. Andrews in order to supersede the Celtic monastery; and the Culdees of this and other ecclesiastical

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<sup>1</sup> As Hungus had offered on the altar a turf in token of the privileges he had conferred on this church, so Alexander performed a symbolic ceremony of a still more singular kind, as a memorial of the gift and liberties he had given. He ordered to be led up to the altar his Arabian steed, saddled and bridled, and covered with a precious cloth; and these, with a shield and silver spear, and a suit of Turkish armour, he presented to the church. (See *Chron. Picts and Scots*, p. 190.)





seats were eventually suppressed, or converted into canons of the Cathedral Chapters.

The most beneficial change now introduced was the creation of parishes, which cannot be traced farther back than the early part of the twelfth century. Previously each tribe either had its monastery, frequently with one or more dependent chapels in the outlying districts; or had a smaller church, with a portion of land belonging to it. When the Saxon or Norman settler received from the Crown a grant of land, if this territory was not already provided with a church, he proceeded to erect one, for his people—its site being often, as at Creich, close to his residence—endowed it for all time coming with the tithes of his estate and a portion of land, which was frequently a ploughgate, that is, 104 acres, in extent. He and his successors thus became patrons of the church, having the right of appointing its incumbent; and his manor constituted the parish. Both the extent and name of the parish, however, were often nearly the same as those of the tribe land. These circumstances account for the irregular shape and fragmentary character of many parishes at the present day.



## CHAPTER V

### ANCIENT PROPRIETORS AND CHURCH OF BALMERINO

‘ In the antique age of bow and spear  
And feudal rapine clothed with iron mail,  
Came ministers of peace, intent to rear  
The Mother Church in yon sequestered vale.’

—WORDSWORTH.

THE immigration of foreigners, already adverted to, which has been called the Saxon Conquest though achieved by peaceful means, with the great changes introduced by it, marked the commencement of a new era. Writing was now becoming common, though as yet practised chiefly by churchmen; and land was held by charter titles. From about the twelfth century onwards the records of the various monasteries and bishoprics furnish many interesting and authentic materials for parochial history, which have as yet been but seldom turned to account by local historians. From the Chartulary of Balmerino Abbey, and the Registers of the Priory of St. Andrews and the Abbey of Arbroath, we obtain numerous notices of Balmerino parish, which enable us to understand the more general features of its civil and ecclesiastical state, and to know something of its landholders. These notices commence about the middle of the twelfth century.

The greater part, if not the whole, of the lands forming the parish of Balmerino, as originally bounded, appears—as has been already indicated and shall presently be shown—to have been included in the extensive possessions of the Celtic monastery of Abernethy. That monastery having been, like others, secularised, its lands were in the twelfth



century held by hereditary lay Abbots, who, assuming Abernethy as their designation, founded the noble house of that name; while a small society of Culdees, with their Prior, performed the clerical duties, and subsisted on a portion of its revenues. The first of the abbatial family whose name is recorded was Hugh of Abernethy, who witnesses a charter in the Arbroath Register. The next was Orm, his son, who flourished in the reign of Malcolm IV. Margaret, the daughter of Orm, was married to Henry Reuel, who obtained with her 'a ten merk land of Old Extent.'<sup>1</sup> From the Balmerino Chartulary we learn where this land was situated.

In the reign of William the Lion (A.D. 1165–1214), and apparently soon after its commencement, Henry Reuel received from that monarch a grant of Cultrach (Cultra), with the customary feudal privileges and duty attached to it.<sup>2</sup> Though Cultrach is alone mentioned in the charter, the territory so called appears to have included the lands of Balmurinach (Balmerino), Ballindard, Ballindean, and Corbie; since in a charter afterwards obtained by Richard Reuel, the nephew of Henry, Balmerino and Ballindard are stated to have been held by Henry Reuel along with Cultrach; while in the Foundation Charter of Balmerino Abbey, Ballindean, Ballindard, and Corbie are described as 'pertinents' of Cultrach and Balmurinach. Adam de Stawel, brother and heir of Richard Reuel, having subsequently, as we shall see, sold these lands to Queen Ermengarde, and she having founded an abbey at Balmerino, Laurence de Abernethy, son of Orm, soon after her death, for himself and his heirs, resigned and quit-claimed to that abbey his and their right or interest in the lands of Cultra, Ballin-

<sup>1</sup> Wood's edition of *Douglas's Peerage*, 'Lord Abernethy.'

<sup>2</sup> The charter was given at *Clonin*, doubtless Clunie, in the district of Stornount, Perthshire, which in the Pictish Chronicle is written *Chuanan*—one of nine places north of the Forth appointed in the time of William the Lion, to which all legal writs were to be returned, and reckoned the local capitals of their respective districts.



dean, Ballindard, Corbie, and Balmerino. We may therefore conclude that these lands had been held by Orm; that they were the 'ten merk land' given by him to Henry Reuel as the dowry of his wife Margaret, who was the sister of Laurence of Abernethy; and that the Crown charter which Henry Reuel had obtained merely gave validity to this transaction.<sup>1</sup>

Land being now held by military tenure, the duty attached to Henry Reuel's grant was 'the service of half a knight' (*miles*). Such a fraction of even the bravest knight could indeed be serviceable to no one except a student of anatomy, if any such then existed; but the meaning of this statement in the charter is sufficiently apparent. The baronial rights which Henry Reuel acquired with his lands were those of *sac and soc, tol and tehm, and infangenethef*. His successors obtained also that of *pit and galloxs*. These feudal terms signified the right of holding courts, deciding pleas, and imposing fines within his own territory; of levying custom on goods passing through it; of requiring a warranty that goods offered for sale had been legally procured; and of punishing capitally a thief caught with the 'fang,' and having the stolen property in his possession, or the homicide taken 'red-hand' within the limits of the manor. Male criminals were hanged, and females were drowned. Every freeholder entitled to hold a court was then to a great extent a petty sovereign within his own estate. The 'Gallowstone' on the top of Cultra Hill, already noticed, no doubt marks the place of execution for those condemned to death in the court of the proprietor of Balmerino, and in that of the Abbot's Bailie in later times.

The Register of Arbroath Abbey furnishes clear proof that Cultra, including, of course, the other lands above mentioned, 'had formed part of the possessions of the monastery of

<sup>1</sup> *Liber de Balmorinach*, or Chartulary of Balmerino Abbey (Abbotsford Club), pp. 4. 5. 3. 7.





Abernethy; it also throws light on the state of that monastery itself towards the close of the twelfth century, when its revenues were divided between the lay Abbot and the Culdees. William the Lion, between the years 1189 and 1198, grants and confirms the church of Abernethy to Arbroath Abbey. At the same time Laurence, son of Orm of Abernethy, for himself and his heirs, quit-claims to that abbey his whole right in the advowson of the church of Abernethy, 'with these things belonging to it, namely, the chapel of Dron, and the chapel of Dunbule, and the chapel of Erolyn (now Errol), and the land of Belach (now Ballo) and Petenlouer; and the half of all the tithes of the property of himself and his heirs, of which the Keledei of Abirnythy have the other half; and all the tithes of the territory of Abirnythy, and all things justly pertaining to that church, except those tithes which are appropriated to the church of Flisk and to the church of Cultram (Cultrach), and except the tithes of his lordship of Abirnythy which the Keledei of Abirnythy have and used always to have, namely, those of Mukedrum and of Kerpul, and of Balehyrewell (now Broadwell), and of Balecolly, and of Invernythy, on the east side of the stream.'<sup>1</sup> King William, in his charter of confirmation, styles Laurence Abbot of Abernethy, who thus appears as bestowing tithes, and in the Balmerino Chartulary as giving away lands, which had belonged to St. Brigid's monastery, while asserting that they were the property of himself and his heirs. He lived as a secular baron at Kerpul, now Carpow, the old castle or mansion of the lords of Abernethy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Registr. Vetus de Aberbr.*, pp. 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> See C. Innes's *Sketches of Early Scotch Hist.*, p. 150. Laurence of Abernethy, with consent of Patrick his son and heir, granted to the Priory of St. Andrews ten shillings of sterlings from the rent of his *vill* of Ballinbreich, to be paid annually on St. Andrew's Eve, for the benefit of the Kitchen at that festival. At the same time the canons quit-claim to him and his heirs for all time coming their right in a toft with four acres of land, and a fishing opposite these acres, in the *vill* of Ballinbreich, which his mother had given to the priory.—(*Reg. P.*, S. *Andr.*, p. 268.)



The five places last mentioned in Laurence of Abernethy's charter, which were all near to Abernethy, appear to represent the lands with which King Nectan in the fifth century endowed St. Brigid's nunnery; while the remaining and distant territory<sup>1</sup> may have formed the additional endowment conferred on the monastery by King Garnard towards the end of the following century. This territory, extending probably from Parkhill, near Lindores Abbey, to Balmerino, included Cultra, which, with its pertinents already specified, had been given to Henry Reuel as his wife's dowry. The monastic possessions appear to have also included Dunbog,<sup>2</sup> but not Glenducky. This last place, where there was a chapel before the Reformation, was obtained by Orm of Abernethy from Duncan, Earl of Fife, along with Balmadethy, in Forfarshire, in exchange for Balbirnie, in Fife.<sup>3</sup> In the dependent 'chapels' of Dron, Dunbog, and Errol, and the 'churches' of Flisk and Cultra, we have an interesting illustration of the method by which the Columban monasteries supplied the religious wants of outlying districts. Similarly the monastery of Mortlach, in Banffshire, had five churches subordinate to it. We may reasonably conclude that the monks of Abernethy at a very early period brought the inhabitants of Flisk and Cultra, or Balmerino, to the knowledge of the Gospel—if this had not been already done by Columba—and that the 'churches' existing at these places towards the end of the twelfth century had also been at first chapels dependent on Aber-

<sup>1</sup> The lands originally granted by the Kings Nectan and Garnard to the monastery may together have possibly extended continuously from Abernethy to Balmerino; and the portion intervening between Mugdrum and Parkhill may have been secularised before William the Lion gave them to David, Earl of Huntingdon, who founded Lindores Abbey there. There is, however, no record proof of the correctness of these conjectures.

<sup>2</sup> There were anciently lands at Dunbog called St. Bridget's lands.—(*Cuppar Presbytery Minutes*, 1814.)

<sup>3</sup> Wood's edition of *Douglas's Peerage*, vol. ii. But, according to Sir Robert Sibbald, Balmeady 'was exchanged by the Earl of Fife with the Earl of Angus, giving Balmeady for Balbirny.'—(*Hist. of Fife and Kinross*, ed. 1803, p. 409.) The Earl of Angus was a descendant of the Abernethy family.



nethy, and had, before the period referred to, acquired the status of parish churches by having assigned to them respectively the tithes and other dues of a defined district which formed the parish, as likewise happened in course of time with each of the three 'chapels.' In the year 1272 the Culdees of Abernethy were either converted into, or superseded by, a society of Augustinian Canons:

Along with the lands of Cultra, Balmerino, and their pertinents, Adam de Stawel sold to Queen Ermengarde the advowson or patronage of the 'church of Balmerino,' he being its patron, as his predecessors had doubtless been.<sup>1</sup> This is the first mention of Balmerino church. In one of the copies of the Foundation Charter of the Abbey it is called the 'Mother-church of Balmerino,' evidently with reference to the fact that the Abbey church was of subsequent erection. As it is unlikely that there would be a church at each of two places in the same estate so near one another as Cultra and Balmerino, the 'church of Cultra' and the 'church of Balmerino' were most probably one and the same, namely, the church of the territory or parish which included both places; and this church, whose site is unknown, would be erected at one or other of them, but presumably at Balmerino. Thus we shall find, in connection with Naughton, that 'the church of Naughton' and 'the church of Forgan'—the latter place being that at which it was situated—are used in the Register of St. Andrews Priory as convertible terms. Possibly, however, the church may have been first at Cultra and afterwards rebuilt at Balmerino. Wherever situated, it was probably an edifice of a very humble character, and may have been allowed to fall into decay after the erection of the Abbey church.

To revert to the Reuels, it was some time after the year 1214 that Richard Reuel, Henry's nephew, obtained from

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<sup>1</sup> *Balmerino Chartulary*, p. 5.



Alexander II. a charter of confirmation of his uncle's lands—Cultra, Balmerino, and Ballindard being alone mentioned—with all the baronial privileges already described. He had previously received from King William a grant of Easter Ardent, and this was now confirmed to him by the charter of Alexander II.<sup>1</sup> The military duty attached to his possessions thus enlarged was the service of one knight. Both Henry and Richard Reuel appear to have been in frequent attendance on the sovereign, as several royal charters in the Arbroath Register are witnessed by them.

The succession of Adam de Stawel, brother of Richard Reuel, to these lands must have taken place before the year 1225, since it was in that year he sold them to Queen Ermengarde, as shall be more fully stated in connection with the history of the Abbey.

As the lands forming the original parish of Balmerino had once belonged to the Celtic monastery of Abernethy, and had been afterwards secularised, so a small portion of them was now to be restored to a religious use by being conferred on an Augustinian Priory; and this proved to be the first step in a reaction or reformation, which culminated, as we shall see, in the restoration of the whole, or almost the whole, parochial territory to a monkish fraternity. Henry Reuel and Margaret, his spouse, grant to the Prior and canons of St. Andrews fifteen acres of land, which are described as 'lying north of Cultra, and west of the road leading from Balmerino to Cultra, as perambulated by the said Henry, Richard Reuel his nephew, Matthew the canon, and his good men (*probi homines*), and also the common pasture pertaining to that extent of land. Among the witnesses to the charter are Josius, or Jocelinus, of Ballendard, Ralph the chaplain (probably the incumbent or parish priest of Balmerino, the word 'chaplain' being then often used in that sense), Adam of Ardist, and Odo

<sup>1</sup> *Balmerino Chartulary*, p. 5.





of Corhri (Corbie?). As regards Henry Renel's 'good men' who joined in the perambulation, those so termed were small proprietors who held land of a subject. It is probable that Joceline, Adam, and Odo held their lands of Henry Renel, and that they were thus 'his good men' referred to. Adam de Stawel, nephew of Henry Renel, afterwards confirms the grant and affixes his seal to the charter of confirmation. Among the witnesses to it is Henry of Ainestrother, one of the earliest notices of this ancient family, which we shall meet with again.<sup>1</sup> The land thus conferred on the Priory, or perhaps only its superiority, is mentioned among its possessions so late as the years 1593 and 1635 under its present name of Priorwell, which is derived from the Prior of St. Andrews *plus* a copious and never failing fountain which it contains<sup>2</sup>—the best in the parish.

Jocelinus of Ballendard, one of the witnesses to this grant, was probably of Norman descent. He appears as perambulating, in company with Nicholas of Innerpeffer, certain lands at Barry, in connection with an agreement entered into between the Abbeys of Arbroath and Balmerino.<sup>3</sup> There was another small property at Arbirlot in Forfarshire, adjoining Innerpeffer, called Balinhard or Bonhard, whose owner, John of Balinhard, died about the year 1275. His great-grandson, also named John, is supposed to have exchanged, about the year 1350, his lands at Arbirlot for those of Carnegie, in Carmylie parish; and hence the family surname and title were changed to Carnegie of that Ilk. The head of this family is now the Earl of Southesk. It has been conjectured that the elder John of Balinhard was the son of the above-mentioned Jocelinus of Ballendard, in Balmerino parish, the latter name being a mere variation of the former. If this conjecture be

<sup>1</sup> *Registr. Prior. St. Andr.*, p. 271-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Registr. Mag. Sigill.*, vol. v. No. 2273 (1593). The town and lands of the 'Pryowewell of Balmuinach'; Martine's *Reliq. Div. Andr.*, p. 180 (1635).

<sup>3</sup> *Reg. Vet. Aberbr.*, p. 197.



correct, Jocelinus was the ancestor of the Earls of Southesk, and the first of the family of whom there is any genuine notice. His supposed connection with the Balinhards of Arbirlot is so far borne out by dates and localities. These circumstances, however, do not in the absence of direct evidence prove the connection.<sup>1</sup> The association of Jocelinus of Ballindard with Nicholas of Innerpeffer in the perambulation at Barry may be explained by the supposition, which is a probable one, that the former represented in this transaction the convent of Balmerino, and the latter that of Arbroath. Balinhard signifies *a township or hamlet on a height*, and there were other places called Balinhard or Bonhard in the counties of Forfar, Perth, and Linlithgow.

The situation of Ballindard, in Balmerino parish, is now unknown, and the name is extinct. Easter Ardint, which also appears in the shorter forms of Ardint and Ardin, was doubtless the eminence now called Airdie Hill; and the lands so named probably extended from the stream which passes the farmhouse of Grange to another which forms the south-west boundary of that farm. Ardin is the diminutive of Ard, which signifies a height; and Ballindard possibly denoted a hamlet somewhere about Airdie Hill, while Easter Ardint may have been the name applied to the more level ground at its eastern base. Ardist, from which Adam of Ardist, one of the witnesses to Henry Reuel's gift of Priorwell, derived his surname, may have been merely a variation of the name Ardint; or, though less probably, it may have denoted a place so called in Leuchars parish, and now known as Airdit.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas de Lundin, or Lundie, also possessed property

<sup>1</sup> See Jervise's *Lands of the Lindsays*, 1st ed., p. 193; and 2nd ed., p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> In the 'New Valuation of Fifeshire,' 1695, printed in Adamson's edition of Sibbald's *Hist. of Fife and Kinross*, there is, under Balmerino parish, the following entry, which is incorrect and misleading: 'Airdit or Skur and Scrogieside, £54, 6s. 8d.'—as if Airdit and Skur denoted the same place. It should be 'Airdit for Skur,' &c.—'Airdit' meaning Douglas, laird of Airdit, in Leuchars parish, who was then also proprietor of Skur.



somewhere about Balmerino. Its situation, however, is unknown. In the reign of William the Lion he bestowed on the Abbey of Cupar—that is, Cupar in Angus—one merk of silver from his land of Balmerino, to be paid yearly by himself and his heirs. ‘And if I should go,’ he says, ‘the way of all flesh in the kingdom of Scotland, my body shall be conveyed to Cupar, and there be buried in the cloister before the door of the church, in the place I have chosen.’<sup>1</sup> He was there buried in 1231, as was also, in 1275, his more celebrated son Alan, Earl of Athole, his last male descendant. This family was connected with the De Lundins near Largo. From Malcolm IV. two brothers, Philip and Malcolm de Lundin, received grants of land—the former those of Lundie in Fifeshire, and the latter those of Lundie in Forfarshire. Thomas de Lundin was the son of Malcolm. He held the office of *Ostiarius* or Doorward to King William, and also to Alexander II., and hence the family took the name of Dorward, or Durward.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rogers's *Rental Book of Abbey of Cupar-Angus*, i. p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> Sir J. Dalrymple's *Collections concerning the Scot. Hist.*, p. 398.



## . CHAPTER VI

### ANCIENT ESTATE, CHAPEL, AND CASTLE OF NAUGHTON

‘Blest is this Isle—our native Land ;  
Where battlement and moated gate  
Are objects only for the hand  
Of hoary Time to decorate.’

—WORDSWORTH.

THE estate of Naughton was disjoined from the parish of Forgan—originally called Forgrund—and annexed to that of Balmerino in the year 1650. The Register of St. Andrews Priory shows that in ancient times it was much more extensive than at present. Down to the sixteenth century the barony of Naughton comprehended, either in property or superiority, besides portions of Leuchars parish, the greater part, if not the whole (except church lands), of Forgan parish, the original name of which was the ‘parish of Naughton.’ The expression, ‘parish of Forgrund,’ as applied to it, occurs only once in the Priory Register, and not till the year 1288. Its church was sometimes called the church or Mother-church of Naughton, and sometimes the church of Forgan. In the twelfth century the estate of Naughton was possessed by a family—probably Norman—of the name of De Lasceles, which was variously spelt, as is usual with the names both of persons and places contained in ancient records. Many members of this family are mentioned in the Register, and several of them as bestowing on the Priory lands in the parishes of Forgan and Leuchars. Richard de Lasceles grants to it three acres, situated on the east side of Friarton and on the north side of the road leading from that place to the church of Forgan. Alan,





son of Walter de Laseeles, gives two acres arable of his land in the parish of Naughton, situated near to the vill of Culbakin (Cowbakie), and extending northwards from the road leading from his own vill to Culbakin, with an acre of meadow extending westward from the land of Culbakin, between the said two acres and the land of Malerether (which was a plough-gate, or 104 acres, in extent), belonging to the Priory. Of the witnesses to the charter the first two are Walter and Helyas, chaplains (parish priests) of Forgan. The *vill* was the cluster of cottages in which the serfs or *villains* (villagers) who cultivated their lord's lands lived, near to his own residence. Duncan de Laseeles gives to the Priory two acres in the territory of Seggin (Seggie), near the bridge of Modrit (Motray), and west of it. Serlo de Laseeles, in the year 1288, 'restores' to the Priory the land called 'Ryhinche, in the parish of Forgan, in Fyf.'<sup>1</sup> One of the witnesses to this transaction was Richard the *scoloc*, in whom we have a survival from the old Celtic Church. The *scolocs* were persons who were being trained to perform the Church service—the lowest members of the clerical order. They occupied the *scoloc* or scholar lands, from which they were bound to supply clerks who could read and sing. In some cases, however, they appear rather in the character of husbandmen or mere tenants of the church land.<sup>2</sup>

The church of Naughton or Forgan, with its revenues—according to the system then in vogue of increasing the emoluments of bishops and monasteries by granting to them the tithes and other endowments of parish churches—was conferred on St. Andrews Priory about the end of the twelfth century, doubtless on the usual condition that the Priory should supply it with a vicar. All the writers who have hitherto given an account of this matter have asserted that the grant was made

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<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Fr. S. Andr.*, pp. 274, 275, 346. See Appendix, No. xxvi §1.

<sup>2</sup> See *Book of Deer*, p. cxxxviii; Robertson's *Scotland under her Early Kings*, vol. ii. p. 379.



by King David I. The assertion is erroneous, as will appear from the following narrative.

Between the years 1188 and 1202, Alan, son of Alan de Lasceles above mentioned, and of his wife Juliana de Sumer-vile, with consent of his own wife Annabla, gives 'to God and to the church of the blessed Andrew the Apostle (*i.e.* the church of the Priory—the Cathedral), and to the canons who now, and shall in future, serve God there the Mother-church of my estate (*fundus*) of Naughton,<sup>1</sup> namely, the church of Forgan, with the chapel of Naughton adjacent (*adjacente*) to that church, and with a ploughgate of land adjacent to the same church, and with all the tithes, offerings, revenues, and rights belonging to it.' The three first witnesses to the grant are Roger, Bishop of St. Andrews, Duncan, Earl of Fife, and Malcolm his son. The ploughgate of land thus granted by Alan de Lasceles appears to have been different from a ploughgate called Malcrether or Melchrethre, the latter having been given to the Priory previously by King Malcolm IV.<sup>2</sup>

Bishop Malvoisine of St. Andrews (A.D. 1202–1238) grants and confirms to the Priory the Mother-church of Naughton, with all its just pertinents which Alan de Lasceles gave to it, as his charter testifies.<sup>3</sup> The same bishop also admits and canonically institutes, on a presentation by the Prior and canons, Richard de Thouni to the parsonage of the church of Forgan in Fife, reserving the vicarage of Gervasius de Nealfa, who shall hold the said church of him, as vicar, during his life, with the chapel of Naughton, and with its lands, tithes, and all just pertinents, paying to him twenty silver merks annually in name of pension—ten at Martinmas and ten at Whitsunday—and also paying the episcopal dues.<sup>4</sup> There is further recorded in the Priory Register the testimony of Laurence, Archdeacon of St. Andrews, that he had heard

<sup>1</sup> For some of the very numerous variations in the spelling of Naughton, as found in these charters and other ancient documents, see Appendix, No. xxiii.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. Pr. S. Andr.*, pp. 260, 196.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.    <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.



from trustworthy men that the church of Naughton had been formerly conferred on the Prior and canons by a noble man, Alan de Lassell, its true patron; that he knows it was confirmed to them by Bishop Malvoisine; that Gervasius de Nefil having, on his presentation by the canons, obtained the church, and having in course of time resigned the parsonage, he (the archdeacon) being commissioned by the bishop to the Prior and canons, procured Richard de Thouni to be by them presented to the parsonage of the church, on whose presentation he was admitted and instituted accordingly. The archdeacon records this testimony 'lest truth should be prejudiced by falsehood, or justice by iniquity'—language which seems to point to some attempt which had been made to deny or invalidate Alan de Lascels's grant of the church to the Priory.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1266 Margery de Lascel, 'in her legitimate widowhood and free power,' grants and confirms to the Priory the Mother-church of Naughton, namely, of Forgan in Fife with the chapel of Naughton pertaining (*pertinente*) to it, and the ploughgate of land adjacent to it, which her father Alan de Lascel, son of Alan de Lascel, had by his charter granted. Two years later, Sir Alexander de Moravia (Moray, or Murray), son of the said Margery de Lascel, grants and confirms to the Priory the Mother-church of Naughton, namely, of Forgan in Fife, with the chapel of Naughton pertaining to it, and the ploughgate of land adjacent to the same church, which his grandfather Alan de Lascel, son of Alan de Lascel, had granted by his charter.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, King David (A.D. 1124–1153) also confers on the Priory 'the church of Forgrund, with all its tithes, customs, and rights, and all things pertaining to it from his whole lordship, and from all his men of Forgrund and Forgrundshire.' Malcolm IV. (1153–1165) confirms this grant

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Pr. S. Andr.*, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.



made by King David, and by the same charter he himself gives half a ploughgate of land to the church of Forgan. By a subsequent charter King Malcolm gives and confirms to the Priory the half of that ploughgate of land in the shire (that is, the parish or district) of Forgan which is called Chingothie, and which he had granted to the church of Forgan. This is the same half-ploughgate as that mentioned in the previous charter. That it was not the church of 'Forgan in Fife,' which King David thus granted to St. Andrews Priory, as has been hitherto asserted, but 'Forgan in Gowrie,' once called Langforgrunde in the Priory Register, is decisively proved by the occurrence, in King Malcolm's second charter, of the name Chingothie, which denotes the place now called Kingoodie, in the neighbourhood of Longforgran. The church of Forgan in Fife was therefore gifted to the Priory by Alan de Lascels, and not by King David.<sup>1</sup>

It further appears from the Priory Register that the church of Forgan which King David bestowed on the Priory was dedicated to St. Andrew. But Forgan in Fife was dedicated to St. Fillan, and was commonly called St. Fillan's so late as the eighteenth century. It was never called St. Andrew's. Moreover, 'the church of St. Andrew of Forgan' is mentioned in a Papal Bull of the year 1156 as then belonging to the Priory.<sup>2</sup> But Forgan in Fife was not given to the Priory, as we have seen, till some time between 1188 and 1202. It follows that 'the church of St. Andrew of Forgan' could not have been that of Forgan in Fife. The erroneous opinion that it was King David who granted the latter church to the Priory of St. Andrews has arisen from the circumstance that in most of the documents in which Forgan is mentioned in the Priory Register it is not stated which of the two places so called is meant. The ambiguity thence arising misled even Bishop Forbes to make the strange statement, that

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Pr. S. Andr.*, pp. 187, 197, 205.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51, 53.





‘St. Fillan’s, . . . the alternative name of the parish of Forgan, in Fife, . . . had an after-dedication to St. Andrew.’<sup>1</sup>

When or by whom the chapel of Naughton was erected, or where it was situated, cannot now be ascertained. It is not mentioned in the *Taxatio Antiqua* or Old Valuation of the Church livings in the diocese of St. Andrews, and of those belonging to the Priory, which is inserted in its Register.<sup>2</sup> Forgan church is there mentioned, being valued at seventy merks, including fifteen for the vicar; as are also the churches of the neighbouring parishes—Leuchars with its chapel at 120,<sup>3</sup> Kilmany at fifty, Logiemurthak at twenty, Flisk with its chapel at twenty-six, Creich with its chapel at twelve merks. From the chapel of Naughton being described in some of the above-quoted charters as ‘adjacent’ to the church of Forgan, it might be supposed that it stood in the immediate vicinity of that church. But in other charters the word used is ‘belonging’ to the church of Forgan, which does not necessitate such an inference. There was in ancient times a chapel at Seamylnes, Newport, dedicated to St. Thomas, but there is nothing to identify it with the chapel of Naughton, though it appears to have been within the barony of that name. When or by whom St. Thomas’s chapel was founded is unknown. It does not seem to have been in existence at the date of the *Taxatio*

<sup>1</sup> *Kalendars of Scottish Saints*, p. 345.

<sup>2</sup> Nor is the church of Balmerino (or Cultra) mentioned in it. Several churches which belonged to the priory in 1187 are wanting in this Valuation. Sibbald gives part of the List of the churches, but not their valuation, and assigns it to the year 1176.—(*Reg. Pr. S. Andr.*, pp. 28-39; Sibbald’s *Hist. Life*, pp. 206-7.)

<sup>3</sup> There was a chapel at Ardit, and another—a private chapel—at Clayton, both in Leuchars parish, besides the chapel of St. Bonoc, or Bonach, in the village of Leuchars. For St. Bonoc’s, see in *Reg. Sigill. Mag.* a charter of 13th May 1586 confirming a previous one of 1564, and Forbes’s *Kalendars of Scottish Saints*, pp. 283, 467. In 1470 a court-hill in the barony of Leuchars was called Bunnow’s Hill, probably a corruption of Bonoc (Fraser’s *Hist. of the Carnegies of Southesk*). In 1539 Henry Ramsay got a Crown charter of the barony of Leuchars-Ramsay, in which he received power to hold a yearly market, called the Free Fairs, at Leuchars, on St. Bonoc’s Day and the week following it (*Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. iii. No. 2114).



*Antiqua.* It is mentioned so late as the year 1690. It is more likely that Naughton chapel would be situated near the western extremity of the estate, and intended for the benefit of the inhabitants of that remote part of Forgan parish. This supposition is so far confirmed by the fact that Naughton charters of various dates, extending down to the seventeenth century, mention as part of that estate certain lands called Kirkhills, now included in the farm of Peashills, and situated south of its present cottages. It is therefore probable that Naughton chapel stood there, and that this was the origin of the name Kirkhills, of which no other explanation has been suggested. Kilburns, now wholly included in the estate of Naughton, and close to the Tay, might from its name be supposed to have been the site of a church; and this might have been the 'chapel of Naughton.' The word *kil*, however, does not in every case denote a church; but, like *kyle*, sometimes stands for the Gaelic *coill*, a wood, so that it is often impossible to decide which of the two meanings it bears. If there ever was a church at Kilburns, it probably commemorated some early Celtic recluse, who found in that retired situation a retreat from the world. But even in such a case it would not have been described as the 'chapel of Naughton,' but would have been called by its own distinctive name of Kilburns.

The 'Grange of Naughton' is also frequently mentioned among the possessions of St. Andrews Priory. The Register states that it was bestowed by 'Bishop R.,' who was either Bishop Robert (1121-1159) or Bishop Richard (1163-1178), but more probably the former, who made many gifts to the Priory, and it is specified as belonging to that monastery in a Papal Bull of the year 1187.<sup>1</sup> Martine of Clermont, who wrote in 1683, states that 'Peesehills, Byrehills, and Cathills' stood in his time on the roll of lands and vassals of the ancient Priory. We might conclude that these lands, or some of them,

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<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Pr. S. Andr.*, p. 68.



represented the 'Grange of Naughton,' but for the fact that Cathills of old belonged to Balmerino Abbey, and along with Peasehills and Byrehills formed in Martine's time, as they still form, part of Naughton estate, possessed then and now not by the Church, but by a lay proprietor. It is certain that Martine's statement means nothing more than that part of the teinds of these lands was, in 1683, paid to the Archbishop of St. Andrews, on whom the possessions of the suppressed Priory, or what remained of them, had been conferred by the Crown when Episcopacy was restored, though the lands in question are not mentioned in the King's charter of 1635, granting the Priory's revenues, as quoted by Martine.<sup>1</sup> The situation of 'Grange of Naughton' thus remains unknown; and as to the cause and time of its ceasing to belong to the Priory, there is the same lack of information. This Grange must not be confounded with Newgrange, now called Scuryngour Grange, which belonged to Balmerino Abbey.

According to Sir Robert Sibbald, the 'tower upon an high rock,' or old castle of Naughton, was built by Robertus de London.<sup>2</sup> We may accept this statement as true of *some* castle which once stood there; but it could hardly have been the tower standing in Sibbald's time and long after it, of which a contemporary sketch is preserved at Naughton. Its style of architecture points to a period of erection considerably later than the twelfth century. How Robert de London acquired, or ceased to possess, Naughton is not known, so many royal and other charters of those early times having been irrecoverably lost. The place of residence of the De Lasceles, who were his contemporaries, was probably somewhere near Forgan church; so that there is no improbability in his occupation of a castle on Naughton rock, while they may have resided in a different part of the ancient estate. His surname De London is also written De Lundin, De Lundris, and De

<sup>1</sup> *Relig. Div. Andr.*, pp. 175-82.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. of Fife and Kinross*, p. 413 (ed. 1803).



Lundoniis. He was the illegitimate son of King William the Lion, and gave the church of Ruthven, as well as other benefactions, to Arbroath Abbey.<sup>1</sup> He married the heiress of Lundin, near Largo, with whose family—as has been already stated—Thomas de Ludin was connected; and assuming that surname, he carried on the line of the Largo family of Lundin or Lundie, which is now represented by the Earl of Ancaster, through his grandmother, Lady Clementina Sarah Drummond.

With the exception of the history of Naughton and its Laids (for which see Part IV., Chapter I.), whatever is known concerning the present parish of Balmerino from near the commencement of the thirteenth century to the Reformation connects itself with the Abbey, in whose possessions the whole of the *original* parish, with perhaps a trifling exception, was ultimately included. To the history of the Abbey we now therefore proceed.

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Vet. Aberbr.*, pp. 41, 194.





PART II

HISTORY OF THE ABBEY



## CHAPTER I

### ROMAN MONACHISM

‘ Who with the ploughshare clove the barren moors,  
And to green meadows changed the swampy shores ?  
Thinned the rank woods ; and for the cheerful grange  
Made room, where wolf and boar were used to range ?  
Who taught, and showed by deeds, that gentler chains  
Should bind the vassal to his lord’s domains ?  
The thoughtful Monks, intent their God to please,  
For Christ’s dear sake, by human sympathies.’

—WORDSWORTH.

THE Celtic monasteries of Scotland having become effete and impoverished, were superseded in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by those of the religious Orders which acknowledged the supremacy and enjoyed the special favour and protection of the Roman Pontiffs. The assimilation of the Scottish Church, in its conventual and other features, to the Churches of England and Rome, initiated a great reformation and revival of religion, in the sense in which religion was then understood. New monasteries arose in all parts of the country. The cloistral life was reckoned the highest form of piety, and thousands eagerly adopted it. We read of laymen at the approach of death entreating that they might be dressed in the monkish habit, as providing for those who died in it a sure passport to heaven. The bestowal of property and privileges on the monks was deemed peculiarly meritorious ; and the only return asked was their prayers, which were believed to possess extraordinary efficacy. Such liberality was prompted by various motives. A bereaved husband or parent would accentuate his grief and submission to Providence by founding and endowing a house



of Religion. A conscience-stricken malefactor would confer on the monks munificent gifts as an atonement to Heaven for his crimes. An aged warrior, weary of strife, would make over to them his whole possessions, and seek admission during the remainder of his days into their society as a haven of security and peace.

‘ Lance, shield, and sword relinquished, at his side  
A bead-roll, in his hand a clasped book,  
Or staff more harmless than a shepherd’s crook,  
The war-worn Chieftain quits the world—to hide  
His thin autumnal locks where Monks abide  
In cloistered privacy.’

The combined influence of piety and superstition induced landholders not only to enrich the monks with extensive estates, but even to alienate for their behoof the tithes and other endowments of parish churches, and to procure for them the erection of edifices much more splendid than their own abodes; thus heaping wealth on those who had bound themselves to poverty, and surrounding with luxuries the devotees of abstinence. So it came to pass that they who had ‘wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth,’ and had subsisted on the most scanty and precarious fare, found themselves, as the years rolled on, occupying stately dwellings, chanting their orisons in magnificent churches, and possessing abundant sources of physical enjoyment in the rich and varied produce of their own ample domains. It is not wonderful that in such circumstances strictness of discipline came to be relaxed, and solemn vows to be lightly regarded. New fraternities successively arose, whose aim was to restore the earlier asceticism. For a time they accomplished this, but only for a time. Eventually all the Roman Catholic monastic Orders in this country fell into corruption deeper than that of the Celtic monks who had preceded them. Such degeneracy, however, was not confined to the monks. There are good grounds



for believing that the life of the cloister was still superior to that of the laity, and even of the secular clergy of the period.

If we judge of the monastic system even in its early and purer periods—for a distinction must always be made between its primitive character and later developments—by the more correct views of Christian duty which now happily obtain, and by its relation to such a state of society as now exists, we must, while respecting the sincerity and devotion of those who embraced it, pronounce it altogether erroneous. The duty of a Christian man is not to retire from the world, but by remaining in it to leaven society by his influence and example.

‘ We need not bid, for cloister’d cell,  
Our neighbour and our work farewell,  
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high  
For sinful man beneath the sky :

The trivial round, the common task,  
Would furnish all we ought to ask,  
Room to deny ourselves ; a road  
To bring us, daily, nearer God.’

If we view the cloistral life, however, in connection with the ignorance and turbulence which prevailed throughout Europe during what are called the Dark and Middle Ages, and apart from the doctrinal and ritual system with which it came to be associated—but which cannot be discussed here—our verdict will be a more lenient one. Along with many evils, it must be acknowledged that important benefits resulted from monachism ere the barbarous races which had overturned the Roman Empire acquired letters and civilisation. That this mode of life became so popular, proves that to a large extent it supplied—as it was intended to supply—a want which was then keenly felt. In those rude and lawless ages the monasteries afforded the only available retreat to such as wished to escape the cruelty of the despotic barons,





or to nourish in peace their spiritual life. The monks were in various ways benefactors to society. They excelled in agriculture, gardening, and the culture of fruit-trees; and were the first to teach these arts to the people, at a time when the lay proprietors of the soil knew only how to consume its produce. Wherever the monks settled, they cleared the forests, drained the marshes, and converted the barren wilderness into fertile ground. They were also the first to grant long leases on easy terms to their tenants, who were seldom or never called upon to serve as men-at-arms, when every vassal was obliged 'to follow to the field his warlike lord.' Nor were the possessions of the monks liable to those sudden changes by forfeiture, death, or sale which too often proved calamitous to the tenants of lay proprietors. In travelling over the country, 'your approach [to the monasteries and other ecclesiastical establishments] could commonly be traced by the high agricultural improvements which they spread around them. The woods, enclosed and protected, were of loftier growth; the meadows and cornfields richer and better cultivated; the population inhabiting the Church lands more active, thriving, and industrious than in the lands belonging to the Crown or to the feudal nobility.'<sup>1</sup> As the defenders of the weak against the strong, doing much to mitigate the evils of serfdom, and led by their interests as well as by their inclination to favour peace, the monks were revered and loved by the people. Their hospitality to wayfarers when inns were as yet unknown, and their charity to the poor were alike conspicuous; and the needy and unfortunate never told their tale in vain at the Convent gate. But the monasteries performed still higher services. Not only did they send forth the devoted missionaries by whom our own country, as well as a great part of northern Europe, was first evangelised, but for several ages those institutions were the sanctuaries of letters and

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<sup>1</sup> Tytler's *Hist. of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 177 (ed. 1841).



religion. In the cloister learning was diligently cultivated, at a time when scarcely any baron was able to sign his own name. Schools were attached to many monasteries, and were taught or superintended by the monks. It was they, too, who preserved and handed down to us the works of the classic authors of antiquity, as well as of early Christian writers. Before the invention of printing they copied out in manuscript whatever books were most highly esteemed. Every monastery had its library, great or small, of precious volumes, when libraries existed almost nowhere else. It is to the monks, indeed, we owe, under Providence, even the Sacred Scriptures, which, but for their pious care and labour, would have perished in the Dark Ages. In short, to quote the eloquent words of Mrs. Jameson, ‘We know that, but for the monks, the light of liberty and literature and science had been for ever extinguished; and that, for six centuries, there existed for the thoughtful, the gentle, the inquiring, the devout spirit no peace, no security, no home but the cloister. There Learning trimmed her lamp; there Contemplation “pruned her wings”; there the traditions of Art, preserved from age to age by lonely, studious men, kept alive, in form and colour, the idea of a beauty beyond that of earth—of a might beyond that of the spear and the shield—of a Divine sympathy with suffering humanity.’<sup>1</sup> The direct dependence of the Religious houses on the Pope, and the intercourse they kept up with Rome, and with the other monasteries of their respective Orders throughout Europe, tended to spread intelligence. The monks are also our earliest historians. Their Chronicles of national and local events, and their Chartularies and Registers in which they recorded their endowments, leases of land, and transactions in property, as well as the ecclesiastical privileges bestowed upon them, form now the chief sources of our knowledge of the Middle

<sup>1</sup> *Legends of the Monastic Orders*, p. xix.



Ages, and are the oldest contemporary records of Scotland which we possess.

In early times monks were simply laymen, and as such were subject to the bishops and ordinary pastors. They went on Sundays to church with the rest of the people; or, if they were remotely situated, a priest was sent to administer to them the sacraments; but at length they were allowed to have priests of their own body. The Abbot himself was at first usually the priest, but his function extended no farther than to his own monastery; and except in the Celtic Church, where a different arrangement existed, he remained still subject to the bishop. But ultimately the monks were in most cases in priest's orders. Such were called *regular* clergy, because they were subject to the conventual rule (*regula*), ecclesiastics who were not monks being called *secular* clergy. The abbot became afterwards independent of the bishop, and sometimes he received from the Pope the privilege of wearing the mitre and other episcopal insignia. Hence arose the distinction between mitred and crosiered Abbots, the latter wearing the crosier, or pastoral staff, only. The bishop, however, could alone confer priest's orders on the monks. It does not appear that the Abbots of Balmerino were mitred abbots: the seal of one of them shows that he at least was not mitred. But it is certain that, like the bishops, they were lords of Parliament; and their designations, though not their names, frequently appear in the lists of those who were present at its meetings, prefixed to the public Statutes. One instance occurs as early as the year 1289, another in 1315 in a Parliament held at Ayr, and there are many others in the subsequent centuries.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Robertson's *Index to Records of Charters and Acts of Parl. of Scotland*.



## CHAPTER II

### THE CISTERCIAN MONKS

*'Here Man more purely lives, less oft doth fall,  
More promptly rises, walks with stricter heed,  
More safely rests, dies happier, is freed  
Earlier from cleansing fires, and gains withal  
A brighter crown.'*<sup>1</sup> On yon Cistercian wall  
That confident assurance may be read ;  
And, to like shelter, from the world have fled  
Increasing multitudes. The potent call  
Doubtless shall cheat full oft the heart's desires ;  
Yet, while the rugged Age on pliant knee  
Vows to rapt Fancy humble fealty,  
A gentler life spreads round the holy spires ;  
Where'er they rise, the sylvan waste retires,  
And æry harvests crown the fertile lea.'

—WORDSWORTH.

As the monks of Balmerino were of the reformed Order called the Cistercian, it will be proper, before proceeding farther, to give some account of this brotherhood.

The Cistercians were an offshoot from the Benedictine Order, which was so named after Benedict of Nursia, its founder. This famous ascetic established in the year 529 a monastery at Monte Cassino, in Italy, where he promulgated his celebrated 'Rule' of monastic life, which was ultimately adopted by all the conventual communities of the West. By this Rule, which breathes a spirit of intense devotion, monks were for the first time obliged to promise 'stability,' that is, continuance in their profession and residence in a monastery

<sup>1</sup> 'Bonum est nos hic esse, quia homo vivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit cautius, quiescit securius, moritur felicius, purgatur citius, præmiatur copiosius.'—*Bernard*. 'This sentence,' says Dr. Whitaker, 'is usually inscribed in some conspicuous part of the Cistercian houses.' (*Wordsworth's Note on the above-quoted sonnet.*)





till death. Private property was to be renounced, and all their possessions were to be held in common. They had to spend seven hours every day in manual labour, and two hours in reading, besides the time occupied in the Church services; while luxury in respect of food and clothing was rigidly forbidden. The enormous amount of wealth gifted to the monks having in course of time led to great irregularities, several attempts were made to check these; but the first important reform was effected in the year 927 by Odo, Abbot of Cluny, in Burgundy, who there restored the strict observance of the Benedictine Rule; whereby Cluny acquired such celebrity that many other monasteries adopted its discipline, and it obtained vast possessions and influence. By the end of the eleventh century, however, the Cluniac monks had, by indulgence in luxuries and otherwise, so much fallen away from their original strictness as scarcely to be distinguishable from other Benedictines.

The next important reform of the cloistral life was that instituted by the monks of Cistercium, or Cîteaux, near Dijon, in Burgundy, and by the Cistercian Order which they there originated. In the year 1098 Robert, Abbot of Molesme—a monastery dependent on Cluny—after he had attempted without success to correct the dissolute manners which prevailed in his house and elsewhere, retired with twenty companions to Cîteaux, described as being then ‘a horrible and unoccupied wilderness,’ and there established a new monastery, in which the Rule of St. Benedict was to be rigorously enforced, and asceticism of the severest type practised. In the following year, however, on the petition of the monks of Molesme, he was ordered by the Pope’s legate to return thither, where he died in 1110. He was succeeded as Abbot of Cîteaux by Alberic, and the latter, who died in 1109, by Stephen Harding, an Englishman, who in early life had visited Scotland, and, as well as Alberic, had been one of those who retired from Molesme, having been himself, indeed, the real



originator of that movement. In the year 1113 the new monastery was nearly extinct for want of monks, in consequence of the severity of its discipline, and a great mortality which had reduced their number, when the celebrated Bernard entered it, bringing with him thirty companions of noble birth, including his own four brothers. The influence of this remarkable man—the greatest Churchman of his time—and his enthusiastic advocacy of the monastic life, speedily drew such multitudes to Cîteaux, that two years after his admission it became necessary to establish four new monasteries, and of one of them, situated at Clairvaux, he was appointed Abbot. It is said that mothers hid their sons, and wives their husbands, lest the spell of his eloquence should entice them to embrace the monastic life. He alone is stated to have founded seventy monasteries, and to have reformed many more. From his name the Cistercians were sometimes called Bernardines. Such was the popularity of the new Order that fifty years after the foundation of Cîteaux the houses connected with it, of which that of Clairvaux was the most famous, had increased to five hundred abbeys, and by the middle of the thirteenth century to eighteen hundred, besides, probably, an equal number of nunneries. The influence of the Cistercian Order, both in Church and State, was at one time supreme throughout Europe, and it eclipsed all other monastic communities. In England, where it had seventy-five abbeys and twenty-six nunneries, its first house was at Waverley, in Surrey, founded in the year 1128, and colonised by monks from Normandy. In Scotland the Abbey of Melrose was the first Cistercian monastery, having been founded in 1136 by King David. Its monks were brought from Rievaulx, in Yorkshire—an abbey which was a daughter of Clairvaux. There were eventually twelve Scottish houses for monks,<sup>1</sup> besides twelve for nuns, of this Order.

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<sup>1</sup> These, according to Spotiswood, were Melrose, Newbottle, Dundrennan, Kinloss, Cupar in Angus, Glenluce, Saddel, Culross, Deer, Balmerino, Sweet Heart or New Abbey, and Mauchline, which was a dependency of Melrose.



In the year 1100 Alberic, the second Abbot of Cîteaux, obtained Papal sanction for his monastery, and in the following year he drew up rules to be observed by its monks. His successor, Stephen Harding, issued a new code of regulations, called the *Charter of Charity*, its purpose being to unite all Cistercian houses in one family or brotherhood. He was thus the true founder of the Order as such. This code was adopted by a General Chapter of Cistercian abbots at Cîteaux in 1119, and was sanctioned by the Pope in the same year. Additional rules were framed by subsequent Chapters; and in 1134 these were digested, probably by St. Bernard, into one system called *The Institutes*, containing eighty-seven sections. *The Book of Usages of the Cistercian Order*, setting forth its peculiar rites and customs, was compiled, in the opinion of some, by Abbot Stephen; according to others, by Bernard himself, about the same time as the Charter of Charity. These three treatises are the authentic sources of information regarding the original *rules and practices* of the Cistercians. The sources of their early *history* are the *Exordium Parvum*, or Short Account of the Origin of Cîteaux, said to have been written at the instance of Abbot Stephen, and the *Exordium Magnum Cisterciense*, or Large Account of the same, composed in the thirteenth century. Other histories of the Order are comparatively modern.

All Cistercian monasteries were, like that of Cîteaux itself, to be dedicated in honour of the Blessed Virgin. They were to be situated in retired places—never in cities or villages. A favourite situation was in a narrow wooded valley beside a river or stream, as well exemplified in England at Fountains and Tintern, and in Scotland at Dundrennan, and also at Pluscardin, a Priory of a reformed branch of Cistercians. The rule of St. Benedict was to be observed in them in the same manner as at Cîteaux. No Abbot might found a new monastery unless he had in his house at least sixty monks, and had obtained permission from the General Chapter, as



well as the sanction of the bishop of the diocese; and the number of brethren transferred to it was to be twelve besides the Superior.

Though the bishop or neighbouring abbots might annul the election of an unworthy person to the abbacy of a Benedictine monastery, yet these institutions, as governed by their own abbots, and uncontrolled by any central authority, were quite independent of each other, and their isolated condition led to great abuses. The Abbots of Cluny had attempted to remedy this state of matters by requiring all the monasteries which desired to be affiliated to that house to become priories subject to it, and to submit to its appointment of their superiors. Such concentration of power was apt to result in despotism. In Cistercian abbeys better remedies for the evils referred to were provided by the Charter of Charity and subsequent statutes. On Holy Cross day—the 14th of September—a General Chapter was to be held annually at Cîteaux, to form a bond of union and frame regulations for the whole order, as well as to see to their observance. All abbots had to attend this Chapter every year unless prevented by infirmity, the poverty of their houses, or the remoteness of their situation. Those in distant countries were to attend only as often as the General Chapter itself might determine, abbots in Scotland every fourth year. Such an assembly was then a novelty, and Abbot Stephen was its originator. (This system of government was afterwards adopted by the other orders of monks and friars.) The General Chapter could suspend or depose any abbot for violation of the rule or other misconduct; and if that assembly could not be brought to agree about his punishment, or about any other matter under discussion, the final decision was to rest with the Abbot of Cîteaux, acting on the advice of some of the wiser members. There was also established a system of mutual visitation of monasteries. The Abbot of Cîteaux, who was to be recog-





nised as the father of the whole Order, might visit any Cistercian house, and correct the faults of its monks. Once a year at least every other Cistercian abbot was himself, or by another abbot whom he deputed, to visit all the monasteries which he or his predecessors had founded; and, with the concurrence of some additional abbots, could depose their superiors for persistent violation of the Rule; and the abbot of every dependent house was to visit its parent monastery with the like frequency. During a vacancy in the office of abbot, and till the election of a new superior, the abbot of the parent monastery was to take charge of it; and his consent was required before a dependent abbot could resign his office. Cîteaux itself was to be visited by the abbots of its 'four eldest daughters'—La Fertè, Pontigny, Clairvaux, and Moribund; and if its abbot should fail in his duty, he might, after being admonished in vain by these four, be deposed by a General Chapter. When Cîteaux was vacant, the four abbots, with some others of its filiation, were to unite with its monks in the election of a new Superior of the whole Order.

Cistercian monks had to procure the means of subsistence by their labour in the cultivation of land and the feeding of cattle. They were therefore allowed to possess for their own use lands and waters, woods, vineyards, and meadows, and such animals as might not excite mere curiosity or levity—deer, bears, and cranes being expressly forbidden. In order to lighten their agricultural labours, and thus gain more time for study and religious duties, they might have granges or farm-buildings kept by lay brothers or *converts*, as these were called, and by hired servants. They were forbidden to possess rents of lands which were not in their own occupation, revenues of churches, tithes of the labour or food of others, dues of mills or of ovens, vills, or villains.

In the ornamentation of churches severe simplicity was enjoined, in contrast to the practice at Cluny, whose monks



maintained that costly decoration and gorgeous ceremonial were specially appropriate to the worship of God. Sculptured or painted representations of the human form—except pictures of the Saviour—were not allowed in any building of a Cistercian monastery, for the noteworthy reason that ‘while attention is given to such things, the benefit of devout meditation and the discipline of religious gravity are often neglected.’ Crosses were to be of wood only, but might be painted. Altar cloths and priestly robes were not to be of silk, but from this rule the stole and maniple were excepted. The chasuble was to be of one colour. No utensils, vessels, or ornaments of the monastery were to be made of gold or silver or precious stones, except the chalice and fistula, which might be of silver gilt with gold. Glass in windows was not to be stained, nor adorned with crosses or pictures. The bindings of books were not to be of silver or gold, nor even gilt. In manuscripts, letters were not to be illuminated, but were to be of one colour only. In respect to these and other matters, the Cistercians have been well termed the Puritans of their time.

After the example of the Psalmist, who said, ‘At midnight I will rise to give Thee thanks,’ and ‘Seven times a day do I praise Thee,’ the Cistercian monks, like other Benedictines, had seven church services daily at what were called the canonical Hours, and another at Lauds; hence these services were themselves frequently termed ‘Hours.’ They were the following:—1. *Nocturns* or *Vigils*, at the eighth hour of the night, or about two o’clock in the morning; 2. *Matins* or *Lauds*, at daybreak;<sup>1</sup> 3. *Prime*, the first hour of the day, between six and seven o’clock, with or without an interval after Lauds; 4. *Terce*, or the third hour, between eight and nine o’clock; 5. *Sext*, or the sixth hour, between eleven o’clock and noon; 6. *None*, or the ninth hour,

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<sup>1</sup> Nocturns are often called Matins by English writers; but in the Cistercian *Book of Usages* the word *Matins* always means *Lauds*.



between two and three o'clock; 7. *Vespers*, between four and five o'clock; 8. *Completorium* or *Compline*, so called as being the completing service of the day, about seven o'clock. At these daily services the whole Psalter was chanted every week, and the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha statedly read, as well as homilies and commentaries of the Fathers. After Compline the monks had a lesson read to them from some edifying book. This was called the *Col-lution*. As the day was anciently reckoned from sunrise to sunset, and both day and night were divided into twelve hours, a day-hour was longer and a night-hour shorter in summer than in winter. Hence the times at which the several services were held in different houses varied somewhat according to the season of the year, and the latitude of the place.

An important part of the monastic system was the Chapter, which was held daily for discipline and other purposes. It will be described farther on.

As regards food, flesh and fat were forbidden to all except the sick, artificers, and hired servants. Each monk was allowed daily a *hemina* of wine (which has been usually described as a pint, but appears to have really been only half a pint), or, as an alternative, a kind of beer called *sicera*. The daily ration of bread was usually a pound. It was to be coarse or brown; white or fine bread was to be given only to guests and the sick. No more than two cooked dishes were to be eaten at dinner, but some delicacy called a pittance (*pittance*) was occasionally given, in addition, to certain of the monks. Even fish and eggs, as well as pepper, cumin, and similar luxuries were at first forbidden, and only the common herbs of the country were to be eaten. From the 14th of September to Easter, and on Wednesdays and Fridays from Whitsunday to the 14th of September, the monks had only one meal in the day. During the rest of the year they had, in addition, a light supper. On those days, however, on which there was





A CISTERCIAN MONK IN HIS CHOIR DRESS.







A CISTERCIAN MONK WHEN HE WENT ABROAD.



only one meal, aged monks were allowed to have *mixtum* before Terce in winter, and in summer before Sext. The refreshment so called consisted of a quarter of a pound of bread and the third part of a hemina of wine. The youths also had *mixtum* before Terce. It was not taken in Lent, except on Sundays and a few other days. The reader and the cooks took *mixtum* in summer before Sext, and in winter after it, as their duties prevented them from dining till the rest had done so.

The dress of Cistercian monks when not on duty as priests or deacons consisted of a white tunic or cassock reaching to the ankles, and over it a black scapular, which was a narrow garment somewhat shorter than the tunic, covering the front of the body and the back, but not the arms, and confined by a girdle of the same colour, with a black hood (*caputium*) covering the head. The scapular was their working dress. In the choir, or when not engaged in work, they wore a white cowl (*cucullu*), which was a large gown with sleeves, with the addition of a hood.<sup>1</sup> From the colour of the cowl and its hood the Cistercians were called *White Monks*; the original Benedictines, whose garments were all black, being styled *Black Monks*. But the Cistercians, when they went abroad, wore a black cowl and hood. In winter they might wear one or more tunics, and one or two cowls. Their garments were made of coarse woollen cloth, and were the same as those worn by peasants at that period. Linen and furs were forbidden. The monks had also stockings, day-shoes, and night-shoes. According to the Benedictine Rule the abbot was to supply to every monk, in addition to his clothes, a knife, pen, needle, handkerchief, and writing tablet. Each monk mended his own clothes, and cleaned his own shoes.

Cistercian monks were bled four times every year—usually in February, April, June, and September. During three or four days after this operation they received special indulgences

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<sup>1</sup> The word *cowl* is often erroneously used to signify the *hood*.



in respect of food and rest, and were for the most part released from labour and the Church services. Seven times in the year the crown of their heads was shorn and shaven for the monkish tonsure, and they plied the necessary instruments on each other at the command of the abbot. The practice of monks shaving their *beards* is said not to have commenced till about the year 1200.

The method of admission into the brotherhood was as follows:—A candidate was required to be at least fifteen years of age. When he had made his petition, he was refused admission for four or five days, in order to test the sincerity of his purpose. If at the end of that time he still persisted in his request, he was led into the chapter-house, where he knelt in front of the reading-desk. Being asked by the abbot what he wanted, he replied, ‘God’s mercy and yours.’ The abbot then ordered him to stand up, and having explained to him the severity of the Rule, demanded of him whether he was willing to obey it. When he had replied in the affirmative, the abbot admonished him, and said, ‘May God Himself perfect that which He hath begun in thee,’ to which the convent responded *Amen*. The candidate then bowed and retired to the guest-hall. The same form was observed as often as he came into the chapter-house after the Rule had been read to him. On the third day he was led into the cell of the novices, and the year of his probation commenced. After two months, and then after other six months, and again at the end of his noviciate, the Rule was read to him. During the whole period he was trained by an aged and learned monk called the *Master of the Novices*, and brought by him into the chapter-house to hear sermons. His course of instruction, which was carried on in a part of the cloister or covered way surrounding the quadrangle of the monastery, during the intervals between the canonical Hours, included the study of the Rule and of the church services, and the committing of the Psalter to memory—all in the Latin language. Meanwhile he



gave attendance at church, at work, and at meals in the same manner as did the monks. On the completion of the year of his noviciate he was again brought into the chapter-house in presence of the convent, and made arrangements for giving away to the poor, or to the monastery, whatever property he had. If he was a layman, the benediction of the tonsure by the abbot followed, when the hair of his head was cut off and burnt, and he was shaven for a monk. Thereafter, at the celebration of Mass he read his profession if he could read, and took the monastic vows of 'stability, conversion of life (which included poverty and chastity), and obedience.' If he was unable to read, the Master of the Novices read his profession for him, and the candidate made a cross on the document with ink, and laid it upon the altar, whence the abbot took it for preservation. After certain prayers and responses were said he knelt at the feet of the abbot and ministers, and did the same before the prior and those standing on both sides of the choir. Then entering the retro-choir, he knelt at the feet of the infirm if any were present. After other prayers had been said, the abbot stripped off his garments, saying, 'The Lord take away from thee the old man with his deeds,' and clothed him with the cowl, which he had previously blessed and sprinkled with holy water, saying, 'The Lord clothe thee with the new man,' to which the convent said *Amen*. He was then brought into the choir, where, as well as in the chapter, refectory, and processions, his place was fixed according to the date of his 'conversion,' that is, of his becoming a monk, as the seniors usually ranked first in order, though the abbot could raise a member to a higher place for his merits, or degrade him to a lower for his faults. During the two following months the brethren were allowed to converse with the new monk in the apartment called the *auditorium*, beside the chapter-house, where the monks were permitted to speak to strangers.

The monks performed certain duties by weekly turns,





and entered on them on Sunday. The *Hebdomadaries*, as such officers were called, were the following:—The *Priest* discharged the functions specially pertaining to that office in the church, chapter, refectory, and elsewhere. He commenced the Hours and the business of the chapter by saying, ‘The Lord be with you.’ He was assisted by a *Deacon* and *Sub-deacon*, who also were weekly officers. Another hebdomadary sang the *Incitatory* hymns and certain parts of the services. The *Reader* read the lessons in the refectory and at collation. While doing so, he had to correct any errors which the prior might notice in his reading. Only those were appointed to read and sing who could edify the hearers. The *Cooks* were two or four in number, and relieved each other in their duties. The *Abbot’s Cooks*, of whom there were two, were appointed for a year, but served alternately for a week in his kitchen, and at his table in the guest-hall. The reason why the abbot had a separate kitchen was, that strangers whom he entertained as his guests might not disturb the brethren when they came at unlooked-for hours. Two of the monks were appointed weekly to wash the feet of the strangers. The *Serger of the Church* lighted candles, trimmed lamps at certain times and places, and provided other requisites for divine worship.

The following were *permanent* officers of the monastery:—The chief of all was of course the *Abbot*, so called from the Syriac word for *father*. Chosen by the suffrages of the monks, he was installed in his office by the bishop of the diocese, from whom he received the crozier and the benediction. The monks then kissed his hands. When any weighty business was to be transacted, the abbot had to consult the whole convent assembled in chapter, in matters of less importance the seniors only; but in all cases the final decision rested with himself. He sang masses at the chief festivals and in the Offices of the Dead, and also at the canonical Hours, in which he took his week of duty like the



rest of the monks; and he performed certain other parts of the church services. He presided in chapter, and at collation; confessed and absolved the brethren, punished them for crime or transgression of the Rule, slept in the dormitory, took his meals in the guest-hall, and when there were no guests, was bound to have at least two of the monks to dine with him; and he might eat in the refectory after Compline. He appointed to office and degraded whom he pleased, from the prior downwards; and in the general government of the monastery his will was no less absolute. No one was to go anywhere, or do anything, however trifling, without his permission.

The *Prior*, or *Claustral Prior*, was the abbot's substitute, and performed many of his duties in his absence. But in several functions which specially belonged to the abbot's office in church and elsewhere, the prior could not take his place, and he could do nothing without his authority. He presided at meals, and served during his week in certain parts of the church services, and even in the kitchen, unless more usefully employed otherwise, as doubtless he would usually be. A *Conventual Prior* presided over a distant dependency of the monastery.<sup>1</sup>

The *Sub-Prior* acted for the prior in his absence, or by his order. In the cloister and the chapter-house he had to see that the brethren conducted themselves according to the Rule, and in the choir he 'stirred them up.'

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<sup>1</sup> A *Priory* was usually a lesser or inferior kind of monastery; but when a Religious house was attached to a cathedral church, as at St. Andrews and Whit-horn, and in England at Durham and other sees, its superior had only the title of *Prior*, the bishop being supposed to occupy the place of the *Abbot*. This explains how it was that though the Priors of St. Andrews had rank accorded to them above all the abbots of the kingdom, on account of St. Andrews being the metropolitan see, they yet had only the title of prior, and their monastery was called a priory. It is unnecessary to point out the absurdity of such misleading names as Crawford Priory, Rossie Priory, St. Martin's Abbey, &c., being given to modern mansions where there never were Religious houses. They might quite as fitly be called Lunatic Asylums—a fine mouth-filling phrase!



The duties of the *Master of the Novices* have already been described.

The *Sacristan* regulated the clock, opened and shut the church doors, took charge of vestments and altar-cloths, as well as other things used in divine service; prepared with other two monks the host for the Holy Communion, and performed the various duties—grave-digging excepted—still assigned to the sacristan of a church, now corruptly called the *scaton*. He had an assistant (*solutium*).

The *Chantor*, or *Precentor*, led and corrected the singing, and took a prominent part in the church services as well as in the business of the chapter. His place in the choir was on the right-hand side, and that of his assistant, the *Sub-chantor*, on the left.

The *Infirmarer* had charge of the sick in the infirmary, provided some one to sing the Hours and read the lessons there, and supplied the books required for these purposes.

The *Cellarer* was an important functionary in the convent. He had charge of the stores of food and drink, and prepared the ingredients of dishes for the cooks, as well as bread and wine or beer for distribution in the refectory. He was to be 'grave, wise, and sober, and to act as a father to the whole monastery.' He had an assistant.

The *Refectorer* prepared food and drink for the novices, had the charge of napkins and spoons for use in the refectory, and collected the remains of meals.

The *Hospitaller* provided food and beds for the guests, served them during meals, and took charge of them when sick.

The *Porter* was to be 'a wise old man, placed at the gate of the monastery'—to which he went early in the morning—'who knew how to give and receive an answer.' When a stranger knocked who, he thought, should be admitted, he let him enter, and then announced him to the abbot, who sent some one to receive him. But when a neighbour or known person came to the gate, the porter



made him stay outside till he had ascertained the abbot's will. Little boys, or those who came with women, were not admitted, but food was given to them and the women outside. To women of the neighbourhood nothing was given, unless in time of famine if the abbot so ordered; nor were women to be entertained in the abbey or its granges, or allowed to enter the abbey gate on any pretence, such as that of washing clothes. The porter had to keep bread in his cell for distribution to passers-by. When he was occupied at the gate and wearing his scapular, as soon as he heard the bell ringing for any canonical service he put on his cowl and reverently did, so far as he could, whatever the brethren were then doing in church. After Compline he retired from the gate, and if he found the church door shut, said a prayer outside of it, and then entered the dormitory for the night. There was a *Sub-porter* who relieved him in his duties.

There was an *Instructor of the Lay Novices*, and in some monasteries there was also a *Master of the Converts*, or lay brothers, who was to be a monk in priest's orders, so that he might act both as their master and confessor.

There was sometimes also a *Vestiary Monk*, who had charge of the clothing of the brethren, and gave instructions to the tailors.

The officers now named are all that are mentioned in the Book of Usages as *generally* existing in Cistercian monasteries. Another, not there mentioned—his office being probably of late origin—was the *Seneschal* or *Steward*, who in Scotland was called the *Bailie* of the abbey. He exercised the civil and criminal jurisdiction, corresponding to that of a baron, which belonged to the abbot as temporal lord of the abbey lands; in virtue of which he could repledge, in certain cases, a criminal from the court of the Sheriff or Clerk of Justiciary. This office was usually bestowed on some landed proprietor in the neighbourhood, and was often hereditary.





In Cistercian, as in other monasteries, some of the monks were constantly engaged during the intervals between the church services in the work of transcribing manuscripts. An apartment called the *Scriptorium* was specially appropriated to this purpose. Here were prepared the copies of the Scriptures, works of the Fathers, and the other books required for the services of the church, eleven of which are named in the Institutes. Other valuable books also were copied. Absolute silence was maintained in the Scriptorium, and only the scribes and superior officers of the abbey were allowed to enter it. Bernard of Clairvaux was zealous in establishing monastic libraries. The Cistercians, however, were not so great promoters of learning as some of the other Orders. While the Benedictine monks, besides giving instruction in the cloister to novices, had often a school outside of it for secular pupils; in Cistercian monasteries, or in places belonging to them, none but novices and monks were to be taught—a rule, however, which appears to have been subsequently either relaxed or infringed<sup>1</sup>—nor was any abbot, monk, or novice permitted to write a book till he had received the sanction of the General Chapter; but such a requirement was by no means equivalent to a prohibition. The kind of life specially aimed at by the Cistercians was one of extreme abstinence, silent contemplation, and devotional fervour, conjoined with manual labour in the cultivation of the soil. They were great agriculturists, and promoted the prosperity of the country by their laborious industry in improving waste lands, and showing how they could be made productive. ‘The stolid population,’ says Dugdale, ‘wondered at these folks in cowls, at one time busied in the divine offices, and at another time occupied in rustic works.’

The lay brothers called Converts (*Conversi*), who were associated with the Cistercian monks, as they had previously

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<sup>1</sup> Thus at Furness the children of the tenants of the abbey were taught in a grammar and singing school in the cloister, without payment, and were also provided with dinner or supper daily.



been with the Benedictines, formed a numerous body. In the church erected by St. Bernard at Clairvaux in 1135 room was provided for about twice as many converts as monks; and the comparative numbers of the two classes were—at least in early times—probably similar in other Cistercian monasteries. While at first many of the monks were drawn from the higher ranks of society, the lay brothers were all of the humblest grade. There was no scarcity of applicants for admission. The motives of piety which induced them to seek an entrance into a house of Religion were no doubt strengthened by considerations of worldly advantage. To be a lay member of the permanent and peaceful society of a monastery—hard as such a life might now appear—was preferable to the wretched condition of a serf under a temporal baron. While some of the converts were employed as agricultural labourers in the more distant granges under the master of the grange, as well as on the lands contiguous to the abbey, others did the work of servants in the monastery itself. They were also the bakers, tailors, tanners, shoemakers, weavers, smiths, masons, and other craftsmen of the convent. They had no voice, however, in the election of the abbot.

The form of admission for lay brothers was nearly the same as that for monks. A novice was instructed by a master in the rules of the Order, as well as in his own special duties. At the end of a year's probation he was led by the cellarer into the monks' chapter, where, having given away his property, if he had any, he took precisely the same vows as the monks. He made his profession by kneeling, joining his hands and placing them between those of the abbot, and promising him obedience until death. He then kissed the abbot and departed. Thereafter he was received into the chapter of the converts, and had assigned to him his rank and place among them, according to the date of his admission.

On Sundays and on the greater festivals, on which they did not work, converts residing in the monastery attended all



the canonical Hours, the night service included. On other days they had to be present at the concluding service of Compline, but were exempted from Terce, Sext, None, and Vespers, attendance at these being incompatible with their daily work. They said their prayers, kneeling on the ground, at these Hours wherever they happened to be. As regards the remaining services, on common days in winter they rose while Nocturns were being sung in church, said a prayer, and then went to their employments at the granges. In summer, not having the mid-day sleep which the monks had, they slept till Lauds, when they rose for the church service, and after prayer went to work. Those residing at granges rose in summer at daybreak, in winter before daylight, said their prayers in the oratory or chapel there provided for their worship, and then went to work. From the 1st of November to the 18th of January they 'watched about a fourth part of the night.' Whether residing in the monastery or at granges, they were exempted from work—except what was unavoidable—not only on Sundays and the principal Church festivals, but on many saints' days—in all from thirty to forty in number annually. At granges there were no bells, except a small one to call the lay brothers to their meals in the refectory.

In their devotions converts did not use service-books, as they were not taught to read. They said the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and certain Psalms and liturgical forms which they learnt by heart from their instructor. In granges they repeated some of these on certain occasions as often as from five to forty times. When in church they said them in an undertone or whisper (*sub silentio*), while the monks chanted their own services. They had to attend Mass at certain appointed times, and communicated on seven days in the year, including the chief festivals.

Whether they were in health or sick, also after they had been bled, the lay brothers received the same *kind* of food as the monks when in a similar condition. Those in the



monastery had likewise the same *quantity* of food, and took their meals at the same time as the monks; but it does not appear that wine was given to them. If the abbot judged it right that any of them should receive *mixtum*, it consisted, in their case, of a half-pound of their own bread and a greater quantity of a coarser kind, and water. At granges, besides the usual pound of bread, they received as much of a coarser kind as they required; and they fasted only on the principal fast-days during Advent, and every Friday from the 14th of September to Lent. With respect to their clothing, they did not wear the white monkish cowl, but, instead of it, had a shorter cape (*cappa*), with tunic, stockings, and shoes (but not boots), and a black hood which extended over the shoulders and breast. Waggoners, and those who tended cattle or sheep, had a larger garment. Smiths were allowed to wear black linen shirts, and other tradesmen leather or woollen gloves. The lay brothers did not shave their heads or faces. They had their own dormitory, infirmary, and refectory. Their beds were covered with skins instead of the *luna*, or coarse woollen rug used by the monks. Every Friday, with certain exceptions, they received 'discipline,' the precise nature of which is not stated, but it doubtless included punishment of some sort for offences. A lay brother disobedient to a master placed over him had to sit three days on the floor of the refectory, without his upper garment, in the presence of his brethren. No one was allowed to wash the head of another, unless of one who by reason of infirmity was unable to wash himself, and whom the prior might order to be washed by another. Any one transgressing this singular regulation was to be flogged in the chapter of the converts 'without any hesitation.' In general, however, the lay brothers were kindly treated by the monks, and the two classes were united by ties of affection, as well as by a common religious interest.

Silence was regarded as a necessary part of monastic life. It was enjoined by the Rule of St. Benedict, and was observed





also by those reformed Orders—the Cluniacs, Cistercians, Tironensians, and others—who had adopted that Rule while adding to it precepts of their own. The Cistercians, however, appear to have exceeded most of the monkish fraternities in the strictness with which they practised silence. Neither within nor without the cloister were they *usually* permitted to speak to each other, except when to do so was unavoidable, and leave had been expressly given. Even the abbot himself, when in the absence of guests he had two or more monks dining with him, was required to keep silence ‘as much as he reasonably could.’ The same restriction applied to the lay brothers. Those of them who were the artisans of the monastery could only speak about the requirements of their crafts in a place appointed for the purpose, outside of their workshops. Smiths alone were exempted from this regulation. Master artisans were expressly forbidden to have a chat with their subordinates in the evening when released from work. In granges the lay brothers could speak only to their master standing, and not more than two together. Shepherds and cowherds, however, might talk to each other about their duties. A lay brother might return a salute, and reply to a traveller inquiring his way; but if asked about anything else, he was to answer that he was not permitted to speak further; and if the traveller should incite him to do so, he was to make no reply.<sup>1</sup>

As some method of communication was necessary, an elaborate system of signs was invented to take the place of words. But even signs were on many specified occasions prohibited, and at all times were to be but sparingly employed. The

<sup>1</sup> The foregoing account of the Cistercians has been compiled mainly from the *Charta Caritatis*, the *Instituta Generalis Capituli*, A.D. MCXXXII. (both of them as printed in Sharpe’s *Architecture of the Cistercians*), and the *Liber Usuum Cisterciensis Ordinis, noviter correctus, emendatus, et ad veram formam reductus; una cum usibus conversorum ejusdem ordinis*: Parisiis, M,D,XXXJ. There are other editions of the *Liber Usuum*. St. Benedict’s Rule has also been consulted.



following are a few specimens of the signs which all Orders of monks used for persons, things, and actions:—

For *Abbot*.—With two fingers take hold of the hair hanging down over the ear.

For *keeper of the church*.—Move the hand as if ringing a bell.

For a *layman*.—Rub the chin and jawbone.

For *bread*.—Bend the thumb and two next fingers in the form of a circle.

For *half a loaf*.—Make a half-circle with the thumb and forefinger.

For *fish*.—Imitate with the hand the movement of a fish's tail in the water.

For *salmon*.—Do the same, and then place round the right eye the thumb and forefinger in the form of a circle.

For *honey*.—Lick the fingers with the point of the tongue.

For *speech*.—Place the hand against the mouth and then move it.

For *silence*.—Shut the mouth and place the finger on it.

For a *book*.—Extend the hand, and move it as if turning over leaves.

For the *text of the Gospel*.—Do the same, and make the sign of the cross on the forehead.

For the *Psalter*.—Make the sign for a book, and then bend the hand and place it on the head in the form of a crown (because David was a king).

For a *work by a heathen author*.—After the general sign for a book, scratch the ear in the manner of a dog.<sup>1</sup>

It appears, however, from incidental statements in the Rule of St. Benedict, that his monks were expressly allowed to converse with each other at certain times. Eventually among the Cistercians also systematic provision was made for conversation at specified hours.

The preceding account of the Cistercian monks refers chiefly to the early period of their history, when they aimed at an extreme type of ascetic practice, and presented a marked

<sup>1</sup> Du Cange's *Glossarium ad Scriptores Mediæ et Infimæ Latinitatis*, Paris, 1840-50, tom. vi. pp. 253-4; Madan's *Books in Manuscript*, p. 35.



contrast to the luxurious living and splendour of church architecture and ornamentation indulged in by the monks of Cluny. The Cistercians were the special favourites of the Popes, to whom they were placed in immediate subjection, to the exclusion of the jurisdiction of the local bishop. It was the policy of the see of Rome to attach to it the monastic Orders, by rendering them independent of all other control. The Cistercians received also other privileges from the Papal See, such as exemption from the payment of tithes of their *novalia*, or newly reclaimed lands, and from the necessity of pleading in any court. In course of time the inevitable reaction set in. Discipline was relaxed, and many things which had been prohibited by the early statutes of the Order came into acknowledged use. The abbot ceased to sleep among his monks in the common dormitory, and lived in state in a separate house. Revenues of churches were gifted to the monasteries, and the Cistercian monks no longer lived exclusively by their own labour and that of their lay brothers and servants, but leased their lands for rent, or feued them. Sculptured effigies both on the exterior and in the interior of their buildings became common, and in magnificence of architecture and decoration their churches were eventually excelled by none. These and other changes, in their relation to the monks of Balmerino, will receive illustration in the sequel.



## CHAPTER III

### MONASTIC BUILDINGS AND BUILDERS

‘ Nor be it e’er forgotten how, by skill  
Of cloistered Architects, free their souls to fill  
With love of God, throughout the land were raised  
Churches, on whose symbolic beauty gazed  
Peasant and mail-clad Chief with pious awe.’

—WORDSWORTH.

MOST of our Abbey and Cathedral churches were built during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Previous to the eleventh century, probably the greater number of the ecclesiastical edifices of Scotland, and many of those of England, were constructed of wood. In the latter country various causes, among which the Norman Conquest was a prominent one, combined to give a powerful impulse to the erection and endowment of churches and monasteries, and the development of a statelier style of architecture. From England this impulse was communicated to Scotland. The union of Malcolm Ceammmor with the Princess Margaret about the year 1070, which, as has been already stated, was the means of introducing important changes in the organisation of the Church, led also eventually to a great improvement in its edifices. This effect is very conspicuous in the nave of the Abbey Church of Dunfermline, which, in the opinion of some, is the church, or part of it, which Queen Margaret is known to have erected there, where her marriage had taken place; though others think that the existing nave was more probably added to her church by King David I. Be this as it may, that portion of the structure is believed not to have been materially altered when the choir





was subsequently rebuilt, and to be the oldest remaining specimen, on a great scale, of the Norman style in Scotland; and it shows both a remarkable advance on the previous architecture of the country, and a striking similarity to the style then prevalent in England, as exemplified in Durham Cathedral, at the laying of the foundation stone of which in the year 1093 Malcolm Ceanmhor was present. The movement thus begun was zealously continued by Queen Margaret's sons and their successors, and eventually resulted in the erection throughout Scotland of majestic Cathedral and Abbey churches, with all the accessories of an imposing ritual. King David I. specially devoted himself to this work. In addition to the new bishoprics which he established, he founded or endowed no fewer than fifteen monasteries, a prodigality which, as Bellenden asserts, drew from one of his successors, James I. of Scotland, when he came to David's tomb at Dunfermline, the bitter complaint that 'he was ane soir sanct for the Crown.'<sup>1</sup> It was, however, one of the best methods which could then be adopted for civilizing his semi-barbarous subjects. The noble and wealthy of the land, and especially the new Saxon and Norman settlers who had received grants of territory from the Crown, hastened to follow these illustrious examples. So vigorously was the building of churches carried on, that, as an old author has remarked, the voice of the Gospel could not be heard for the noise of hammers and trowels. The spirit of enthusiasm, indeed, pervaded all classes of the community.

' By such examples moved to unbought pains,  
The people work like congregated bees;  
Eager to build the quiet Fortresses  
Where Piety, as they believe, obtains  
From Heaven a *general* blessing; timely rains  
Or fruitful sunshine; prosperous enterprise,  
Justice and peace.'

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<sup>1</sup> *History of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 300 (ed. 1821). Yet this did not prevent James I. himself from founding and richly endowing the Charterhouse at Perth.



It is believed that those splendid structures, of most of which only the ruins now remain, and excite so much interest in the mind of every lover of Art, were the work of Freemasons, who, according to the most trustworthy accounts, originated in the Middle Ages, and travelled from one country to another, wherever their services were required. This opinion is strengthened by the fact that many, and even close resemblances, can be traced, both in the plans and minute details of edifices remote from each other. Whenever a cathedral or conventual church was to be erected, a lodge of Freemasons, governed by their own laws, and enjoying important privileges, is believed to have settled in the neighbourhood. Such a society was instituted near the end of the twelfth century by Jocelyn, Bishop of Glasgow, for the rebuilding of his cathedral, and it obtained a charter of protection from William the Lion. The oldest masonic lodges in Scotland are said to be those of the towns which contained some early and important church or abbey, with which they are understood to be coeval. The *designers* of those magnificent buildings were, however, generally the monks and churchmen themselves, who were devoted to the study of architecture, as well as of the various arts, such as painting and sculpture, connected with the decoration of churches. The erection of an abbey was usually the work of a lengthened period, additions being made from time to time, according to the necessities of the convent and the means at their disposal.

The ground plan of all those structures was nearly the same. Cistercian monasteries especially were remarkably uniform in this respect, and their component parts were the following:—The principal edifice was, of course, the *Church*, which was built in the form of a Latin cross, having its axis extending from east to west. In its construction it was customary to commence with the head of the cross, or east end, and to finish the *Choir*, as that portion was called, as soon as possible for divine service. The choir in the early style

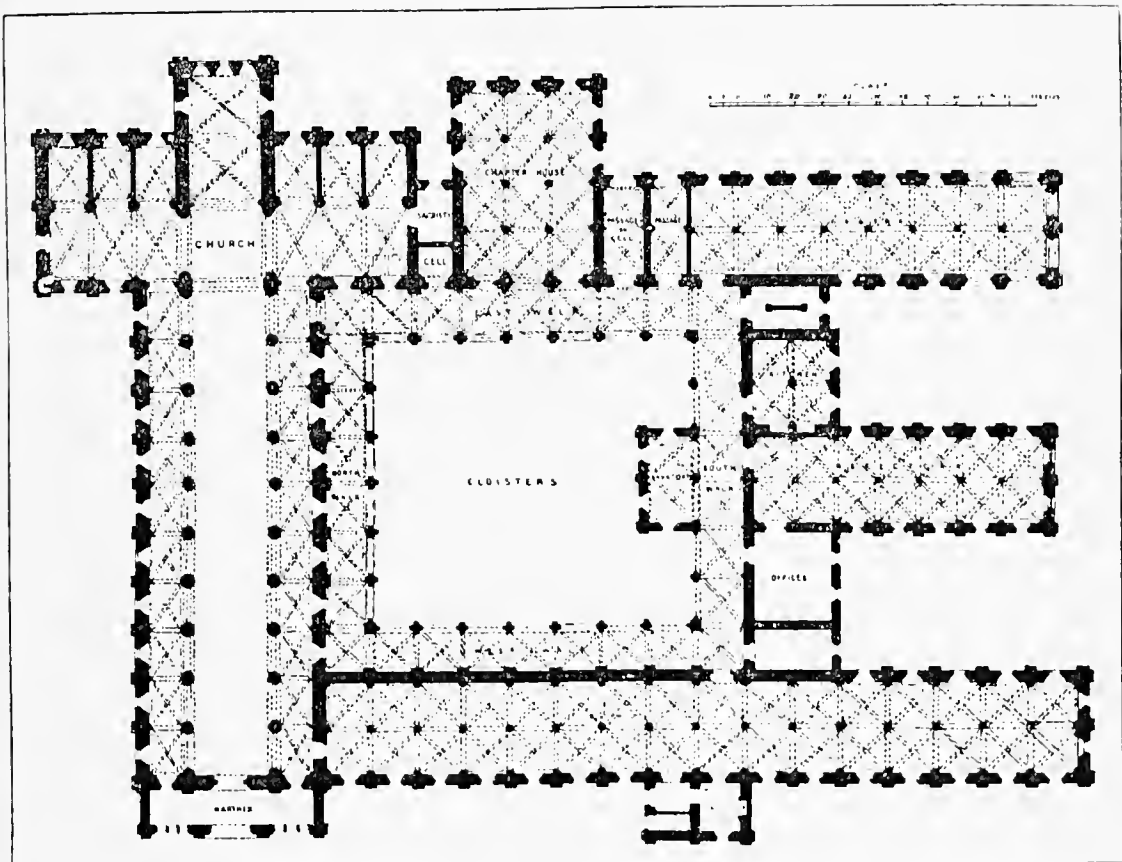


of Cistercian architecture was short, having usually only two compartments or bays. The *Transepts*, or arms of the cross, were next added, having each two or three chapels on the east side, with partition walls between them. The building was then frequently filled in by a temporary wall at the west end, and the lower portion of the cross, or *Nave*, was sometimes not erected till a considerable time afterwards. In some monasteries, as in that of Fountains, in Yorkshire, there was a porch, or *Narthex*, extending along the whole of the west end of the nave, roofed as a lean-to against the west wall, and covering the west doorway. The *Tower* was in most cases placed at the crossing, where the transepts intersected the main body of the building. The General Chapter of Cîteaux, in 1134, sanctioned only low wooden bell turrets, and prohibited the erection of towers, either of great height or of stone.

The *interior* of the church comprised the following portions, extending from east to west:—The *High Altar* stood at the east end, detached from the wall. Next to it was the *Presbytery*, appropriated to the officiating ministers. The word presbytery, however, is often used to denote the whole choir. Adjoining this was the *Choir proper*, or ritual Choir, where the monks sat in rows of stalls, those on the south side facing those on the north. West of the choir, by an unusual arrangement, was the *Retro-choir*, where sat such of the infirm monks as were able to attend the services. At the west end of the building was the portion occupied by the lay brothers, and the space intervening between this and the retro-choir was assigned to the novices and strangers.

In the thirteenth century various alterations were introduced in the construction of Cistercian churches. Thus aisles were often added to the choir, as was also in some cases an eastern *Apse*, with radiating chapels. In the aisles of the transepts the partition walls separating their chapels were dispensed with, and the chapels thrown open. Lofty stone towers were erected, as at Fountains and Furness. These towers





MODEL PLAN OF A CISTERCIAN ABBEY.





were often covered with a low pyramidal roof. In Scotland they frequently ended in a saddle-back roof, with crow-step gables, as at Sweet Heart or New Abbey, in Dumfriesshire.

The erection of Balmerino Abbey must have been commenced soon after the year 1225, but we have no details regarding the building either of its church or of its other structures. It would not be dedicated till its completion, which was probably not effected till many years after its commencement. Arbroath Abbey was not dedicated till fifty-five years after it was founded. The church of St. Andrews Priory, which was also the Cathedral church, is known not to have been finished till 158 years after it was begun. Such delay admitted of every portion being executed in the most tasteful and substantial manner; but it also led, in many instances, like that of St. Andrews Cathedral itself, to a diversity of style in the several parts of the same edifice, due to the change of fashion which had meanwhile taken place.

Most of the domestic buildings of a monastery surrounded and enclosed a quadrangular area, called the *Cloister Garth*, having along its four sides a walk covered by a roof, which was supported on the outer side by a row of pillars. This covered walk was the *Cloister* proper. The quadrangle and surrounding apartments were usually, for the sake of warmth, on the south side of the nave of the church. At Balmerino, however, as also at Melrose and Tintern, they were on the north side of the nave, which formed their southern boundary. This position was probably adopted to facilitate drainage, and, in the case of Balmerino Abbey, in order also to leave open, from the outer windows on the north side of the quadrangle, an extensive view of the Tay and the beautiful scenery beyond it. When the quadrangle was thus situated, the arrangement of the buildings on its eastern side, in their order from south to north, being the reverse of the usual order, was as follows.

A doorway in the north wall of the nave, at its junction with the north transept, or sometimes, as at Balmerino, in



the west wall of that transept, gave access to the church from the cloisters. Another doorway, in the north wall of the same transept, gave access to the *Sacristy*, or *Vestry*, which immediately adjoined the church, and was barrel-vaulted, and lighted by an east window.

On the north side of the sacristy, and parallel to it, was placed the *Chapter-house*, which in the beauty of its architecture was surpassed only by the church. It was vaulted, and divided by pillars into three equal arcades or aisles, extending from west to east. The entrance to it was on its west side by an archway forming the termination of its middle aisle. This and the similar archways opposite the south and north aisles were—at least in earlier times—all open to the weather. *Sedilia*, or stone benches, on which the monks sat, were placed along the walls. The Abbot's seat stood against the middle of the east wall. The chapter-house was sometimes lighted only by windows at the east end of the three aisles, but more frequently it had additional windows in that portion of its north and south walls which projected beyond the adjoining buildings.

Next to the chapter-house, on its north side, there was often a barrel-vaulted apartment having a doorway at each end. This was one of those portions of the buildings which received the name of *Auditorium*. The Book of Usages mentions two apartments so called, one of which was next the chapter-house; the other was next the kitchen. The former was that in which the monks conversed with visitors or strangers after they had obtained the Abbot's permission to do so. The *Locutorium*, or parlour, appears to have been another name for it; but it is never so called in the Book of Usages.

Adjoining this auditorium, when it did exist, or next to the chapter-house when it was wanting, was the *Slype*, or passage, which was barrel-vaulted, leading out from the quadrangle and cloister to the precincts on the east side.



Next to the slype, but at right angles to it, was usually situated the *Fraternity*, or common day-room of the monks, extending northwards beyond the adjoining buildings, and thus capable of being lighted on both sides. It had a single row of pillars extending along its centre, and supporting a vaulted roof. Not only was this apartment in early times without a fireplace, but in some, if not in all cases, its outer end was open to the air—a striking proof of the austerity then practised by the Cistercian monks. In the fourteenth century the open end was closed with masonry, and fireplaces were inserted. The fraternity, with the dormitory over it, may still be seen at Pluscardin. Though the term fraternity (*frateria*) occasionally occurs in Cistercian chronicles,<sup>1</sup> it is never employed in the Book of Usages.

A second story covered all the vaulted apartments now described. The northern portion of this upper story, which was over the fraternity, formed the monks' *Dormitory*, a long undivided chamber without a fireplace; while over the chapter-house was the *Scriptorium*, or writing-room. In this upper story also a passage extended from the dormitory southwards to the north transept of the church, and passing through the north wall of this transept by a doorway, ended in a broad staircase built against its west wall, and leading down to the floor of the church. By this passage and stair the monks proceeded from their dormitory to the night-service in the choir, without being exposed to the open air. The stair still exists at Tintern, Kirkstall, Pluscardin, and the Augustinian Priory of Hexham. At New Abbey the stair has disappeared, having been probably a wooden one, but the doorway in the transept wall—in this case the *south* transept—remains. On the west side of the fraternity was another staircase, which gave access to the cloister from the dormitory.

On the north side of the quadrangle the buildings were

<sup>1</sup> Sharpe's *Architecture of the Cistercians*, Part II. p. 15.



the following, in their order from east to west. Adjoining the last-mentioned staircase, and on its west side, was the *Kitchen*, entered from the north walk of the cloisters, and having two or more fireplaces.

An apartment very frequently mentioned in the Book of Usages was the *Calefactory*, in which a fire was kept burning. No position is assigned to this apartment in Sharpe's admirable plan of a Cistercian monastery; nor indeed, strange to say, is it mentioned by him as a *distinct* one. He supposes it to have been identical with the kitchen; but the kitchen and the calefactory are expressly mentioned in the Book of Usages as *separate* apartments. The calefactory must have been different from the fraterly also, with which some identify it, if both names were in use at the same period, since in the latter, at least in early times, there appears to have been no fireplace. Possibly the same apartment was at first called the fraterly, and at a later period the calefactory when fireplaces were inserted in it.

West of the kitchen was the *Refectory* or dining-hall, entered from the centre of the north walk or cloister, and extending outwards at right angles to it. In architectural elegance the refectory ranked next to the chapter-house. It had a single row of columns extending down the centre, usually supporting a wooden roof. In a recess of its west wall was placed the *Analogium*, or stone lectern, from which the lessons were read to the convent during meals.

Outside of the refectory, near its door, and variously placed in different monasteries, was the *Lavatory*, in which the monks performed their ablutions.

Immediately west of the refectory were one or two offices, probably used for the storing of provisions. The *Cellar* was a recognised apartment in Cistercian houses.

Adjoining these, on the west side, stood a building which, with the exception of the church, was the largest of the whole group. It formed the west side of the quadrangle, and





extended northwards beyond it. This was the *House of the Converts* or lay brothers—their day-room and work-room, and probably also their refectory and chapter-house—and its upper story formed their dormitory. Like the monks' frater and refectory, its lower story had a single row of columns extending down its centre. Its roof was vaulted. A splendid example still exists at Fountains Abbey. From this lower apartment the lay brothers had access to their place in the nave of the church by a doorway in its north aisle. It was lighted by windows in its west side, and by others in its east side where it stood clear of the other buildings. The dormitory over it was lighted in a similar manner, and was usually covered by a wooden roof. From this apartment there was sometimes a stair, at its south end, leading into the nave of the church. This stair still exists at Furness. On the outside of the west wall of the house of the converts, but attached to it, there was sometimes a small building, which was probably the residence of the master of the converts. 'We can well imagine the issuing forth of this large body of workmen, after their return to the day-room from attendance at early morning prayers, through the three great doorways that were provided in the west wall of the building for this purpose; but the scene which presented itself in the interior of the buildings, after the day's work was ended, and when the voiceless crowd which filled it had reassembled under its low-vaulted roof, previously to retiring in silent procession, under the marshalling of their superintendent, the "Magister conversorum," up their stone staircase to the common dormitory above, is not so easily imagined.'<sup>1</sup>

Abbots might be buried in the chapter-house, and common monks in the quadrangle, where their tombstones were to be laid level with the ground, so as not to be the cause of stumbling to those passing over them; but interments appear to have taken place outside of the cloister also. In the larger

<sup>1</sup> Sharpe's *Architecture of the Cistercians*, Part II. p. 17.



Cistercian churches none but kings, queens, and bishops might be interred; and such personages might, if they preferred it, obtain a resting-place in the chapter-house.

In addition to the buildings which surrounded the cloister garth, there were, at least in later times, others outside of it, and detached from the central group. One of these was the *Abbot's house*, which stood east of the chapter-house. It was of two stories, the lower containing his kitchen, which was vaulted, and the upper the apartments in which he resided. Sometimes he had a private chapel near his house.

The *Hospitium*, or *Guest-hall*, was another detached building, having probably a day-room on its ground floor, and a dormitory over it. The *Infirmary*, also, may have stood apart from the cloister.

St. Benedict recommended that a monastery should have water, a mill, and a garden; hence there was usually a mill on the stream beside which a Cistercian abbey was built. The stream was sometimes dammed up to form a fish-pond, and was turned to various purposes of utility and sanitation.

The *Porter's cell* was generally over the abbey gateway, which was vaulted, and had a broad entrance for wheeled vehicles, and a narrow one for foot passengers.

The whole precincts of the monastery, frequently extending to many acres of ground, were enclosed by an outer wall, in which was placed the gateway. A great portion of such a wall still exists at New Abbey, composed of large blocks of granite. At Pluscardin, also, the larger part of the enclosing wall remains. A great part of the high wall which surrounded the precincts of the Augustinian Priory of St. Andrews is still a well-known and striking feature of the place, as is also its vaulted gateway.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this description of the buildings and apartments of a Cistercian monastery, and their relative positions, Sharpe (*Architecture of the Cistercians*) has been for the most part followed, along with the *Liber Usuum Cisterciensis Ordinis* already referred to.



Such was the *normal* plan of a Cistercian monastery. We reserve description of the buildings of Balmerino Abbey till in a subsequent chapter they can be considered in connection with the existing ruins.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Part II, chap. xii.



## CHAPTER IV

### FOUNDATION OF THE ABBEY : ABBOT ST. ALAN

‘ A house of prayer and penitence—dedicate  
Hundreds of years ago to God, and Her  
Who bore the Son of Man ! An Abbey fair  
As ever lifted reverentially  
The solemn quiet of its stately roof  
Beneath the moon and stars.’

—WILSON.

HAVING briefly described the characteristics of mediæval monachism, and the special rules and practices of the Cistercian monks, as well as the general plan of their edifices, we now proceed to relate the history of the Cistercian Abbey of Balmerino, arranging our materials for the most part under the names of the respective Abbots.

QUEEN ERMENGARDE, or EMERGARDE, the second wife of King William the Lion, and daughter of Richard, Earl of Bellomont or Beaumont, who was a great-grandson of William the Conqueror, is asserted by tradition to have made repeated visits to Balmerino for the benefit of her health. During her married life she is said to have exercised a beneficial influence on her husband and the events of his reign. After his death she appears to have resided chiefly at Forfar, ‘the castles and hamlets of which,’ Hector Boece informs us, ‘with its plains, pastures, and lochs, and many things besides, in which she had taken pleasure, were given to her by her son Alexander as a sufficient source of maintenance, because she had determined to spend the rest of her days in the place where St. Margaret had sometime lived.’<sup>1</sup> We know

<sup>1</sup> *Scot. Hist.*, fol. 279, p. 2, ed. Parisius, 1574.





not how or where Queen Ermengarde was lodged when she frequented Balmerino as a health resort, but the locality must at that period have contained some edifice suitable for the residence of so distinguished a visitor. It was probably the manor-house of Adam de Stawel, the proprietor of Balmerino. Be this as it may, in her widowhood she resolved, in accordance with the religious ideas of the time, and moved by gratitude for the benefit to her health which had resulted from her visits, and doubtless, also, by the amenity and retirement of the situation, to found at Balmerino a Cistercian Abbey. The monks are often credited with having selected for themselves the best and most fertile parts of the country; but the truth is, that the choice was generally made not by them, but by their benefactors. In many cases their lands when first granted to them were waste, and therefore worthless to their previous owners—having been granted just because they were worthless—and were afterwards brought under cultivation and rendered productive by the labours of the monks themselves; and this was true especially of the Cistercian monks. In other instances, as in that of Balmerino Abbey, charming situations were chosen because it was the design of the donors—as it doubtless was that of Queen Ermengarde—to devote to the cause of religion, as they understood it, the best they possessed or could procure.

We have seen that in the year 1225 Adam de Stawel, as heir to Henry and Richard Reuel, was proprietor of Cultra, Balmerino, and Ardint—most of the lands of the parish as then bounded being included under these names—and also patron of the church of Balmerino. On the first Sunday after the festival of St. Dionysius—which festival was on the 9th of October—in that year, he resigned, *by staff and baton*—symbols of feudal conveyancing—to Queen Ermengarde, in the court of her son Alexander II. at Forfar, these lands, *both demesne and servile*, with the advowson or patronage of the church, that she might apply them to whatever use she



pleased, without opposition from him or his heirs. This transaction was in fulfilment of an agreement made at the same time and place between the Queen and De Stawel, by which she 'promised' and he 'made oath, having touched the *sacrosancta*'—which probably mean the Gospels—faithfully to implement. The agreement was to the effect that the Queen was to pay to De Stawel at Temple<sup>1</sup> of London (Lundin or Lundie, near Largo) a thousand merks sterling for these lands; and that before the first instalment was received by him he was to deliver the charters of the lands, granted to himself and his predecessors by William the Lion and Alexander II., into the hands of the Master of the military Order of the Temple, who was to deliver them to the Queen, or to a messenger appointed by her, as soon as the whole of the money was paid. De Stawel afterwards acknowledged by his letters-patent that he had received, in the presence of two chaplains and other brothers of the said 'Temple,' the first instalment of the money by the hands of Thomas, son of Ranulf, and the second half by the hands of the monks of Melrose, as the price of the property thus sold.<sup>2</sup>

The possession of these lands now enabled Queen Ermen-garde to fulfil her pious design. One of her first acts was perhaps to grant in 1227 a charter conferring the church of Balmerino and its revenues on the rising monastery; for what is probably a portion of such a charter, dated in that year, is recorded on part of a leaf of the manuscript Chartulary, the rest of which has been torn away.<sup>3</sup> Be this as it may,

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<sup>1</sup> The Templars were a military Order, whose headquarters were on the site of the Temple of Jerusalem. The Order was founded to defend pilgrims to the Holy City from the attacks of the Saracens. They had numerous possessions throughout Europe. A house of the Order was called 'Temple.' They often preserved the treasure of kings and nobles, and had the right of sanctuary.

<sup>2</sup> *Balmerino Chartulary*, Nos. 4, 5, 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 11. The fragment—which is the concluding portion—of the charter is as follows:—'This donation is made by us with the assent and concession of Alexander, King of Scotland, . . . and with the assent and concurrence of the Chapter of St. Andrew, with the consent also of the archdeacons



the erection of the Abbey must have been speedily commenced,<sup>1</sup> for by the autumn of the year 1229, when it was probably first taken possession of by the monks, it must have been so far advanced as to contain at least an 'oratory,' or church, a refectory, a dormitory, a guest-hall, and a porter's cell, as well as the books necessary for divine service—doubtless in this instance written in the Scriptorium of Melrose Abbey—all which were required by the rules of the Cistercian order to be ready in a new monastery before the monks could be settled in it. When the erection of the Abbey was completed, it was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and St. Edward the Confessor, but the date of this event is unknown.

The original company of monks came from Melrose Abbey, whence they were sent, according to the Melrose Chronicle, on St. Lucy's Day, 1229, with Alan as their first abbot. If they crossed the Forth at Queensferry, they would probably break their journey by a day's rest at the Cistercian Abbey of Culross, a few miles distant from that place, which the Earl of Fife had founded twelve years previously, and whose monks would be much interested in the establishment of a new house of their Order on the Firth of Tay. It had doubtless been to these emigrants from Melrose an act of self-denial to quit the valley of the Tweed and the parent monastery of their Order in Scotland, possessing, too, such variety of attractions, and consecrated by so many saintly associations, to go forth to a residence new and incomplete, in a district to which they were probably total strangers. But we can imagine their glad

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of the Church of St. Andrew unanimously adhibited: Whose authentic seals we have caused to be affixed to this writ, of their free will, along with our seal. Done in the year of grace M<sup>o</sup>CC<sup>o</sup>.xx.vii<sup>o</sup>. 'In annexing of churches with their revenues to abbaies or priories, the king's and bishop's confirmation was adhibited, in regard their jurisdiction, rights and casualties were thereby impaired.'—(Forbes on *Church Lands and Tithes*, p. 96.)

<sup>1</sup> In a list of the dates of the foundation of Cistercian monasteries recorded by a monk of Kinloss, the Abbey of St. Edward's, that is, of Bahmerino, is said to have been 'founded' in the year 1227, which possibly means that the erection of the buildings was then commenced. (See Stuart's *Rec. Kinloss*, p. 13.)



surprise when, after a long and toilsome march, they reach the crest of the high ridge overlooking Balmerino, and the magnificent panorama suddenly burst upon their sight. Before them is the majestic Tay—

‘Rolled down from Highland hills,  
That rests his waves, after so rude a race,  
In the fair plains of Gowrie . . . . .  
. . . . . Yonder to the east,  
Dundee, the gift of God,’

reposing under the shelter of its ‘Law.’ Beyond are the Braes of the Carse and the Sidlaw range, encircling by a wide sweep this foreground of smiling plain and sparkling estuary; while in the background, towering up against the sky, are seen the lofty peaks of the distant Grampians. Let us hope that when the way-worn monks beheld this noble prospect, of its kind scarcely surpassed in Scotland, and the greater portion of which was henceforth to be daily in their view; and when their eyes lighted on the picturesque spot selected for their own abode, low down near the margin of the Tay, overlooking a beautiful dell, and skirted round by a series of heights—thus affording that seclusion so much sought by the Cistercians—they would deem Balmerino no bad exchange even for ‘fair Melrose’ itself, the choice of such a situation evincing the taste, no less than the piety, of its royal and widowed Foundress.

We may feel assured that the satisfaction of the monks would be more than equalled by that of the inhabitants of the district, who would regard them with veneration and affection. Great would be the joy and excitement when the rustics saw them approaching in solemn procession, with a cross borne before them—as their manner was when thus journeying—and at length entering their new quarters. As there were doubtless serfs residing on the lands now the property of the Abbey, they too would rejoice in the prospect of the freedom, or at least the improvement of their condition, which would result from their connection with the monks.





The arrival of the peaceful brotherhood would indeed be the great event of the time throughout the North of Fife, and beyond it.<sup>1</sup>

We have no information as to the number of the monks forming the convent, except at a late period of its history. We have seen that by the Cistercian rules there could not have been fewer when the monastery was founded than twelve besides the abbot, and that Melrose must have had at least sixty monks before it was permitted to send out a colony to this new monastery. It had often many more. Under the first Superior of the Tironensian Abbey of Lindores there were twenty-six monks. In the year 1457 a charter granted by that house was signed by twenty-five, and another, in the year 1546, by twenty members. In the Augustinian Priory of St. Andrews there were in 1555 thirty-four canons, besides servants and dependants; but in all monasteries the number varied from time to time. A feu-charter signed by the Abbot and Convent of Balmerino in 1537 contains only fifteen names, which will be found on a subsequent page. Other similar documents, both of an earlier and a later date, have still fewer signatures; but there is no reason to suppose that any one of them was signed by all the monks, some of whom might be infirm, while others might be necessarily

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<sup>1</sup> 'Anno Domini MCCXXIX facta est abbatia Sancti Edwardi de Balmorinac a rege Alexandro et matre ejus; et missus est illuc conventus de Melros, cum domino Alana Abbate suo, in die Sancte Lucie virginis.'—(*Chron. de Mailros*, p. 141.) Fordun gives the date and incident in nearly the same words. There were two saints of the name of Lucy, whose 'days' are the 19th September and the 13th December respectively. The former is more probably the day here referred to. It is, however, somewhat doubtful if 1229 is the correct year. A composition or indenture, concerning certain tithes, executed at the Cistercian Abbey of Kinloss on the 20th September of that year (printed in Stewart's *Rec. Kinloss*), is stated to have affixed to it the seals of seven Cistercian abbots, one of whom is the 'Abbot of St. Edward's.' If these abbots were all present at Kinloss on the 20th September, the monks must have been settled at Balmerino at an earlier date than the 19th September 1229; at least Abbot Alan could not have set out with them from Melrose on that day. Yet it is unlikely that the Chronicler of Melrose, whence the monks were sent to Balmerino, was ignorant of the true date of that event.



absent. Moreover, in the sixteenth century, to which all the documents just mentioned belong, the monks were probably fewer in number than in earlier times, when monachism exhibited its greatest vigour, and the passion for the cloistral life was at its height. Perhaps we shall not greatly err if we suppose that the monks of Balmerino would usually average not fewer than twenty-five, and that the lay brothers would be more numerous than the monks, at least in the early periods of its history.

We do not know whether, or to what extent, the inhabitants of the parish of Balmerino were displaced when its lands came into the possession of the monks. It can scarcely be supposed that so harsh a measure as a general eviction would be resorted to. As these lands had previously been partly *demesne*, that is, occupied by the proprietor and cultivated by his bondsmen or villains, and partly *servile*, that is, held of him by servile tenants, the demesne lands would no doubt be now occupied and laboured by the monks themselves and the lay brothers of the convent. The villains, who would be transferred with the land, would probably be retained as servants of the Abbey, and some of the lay brothers may have been drawn from them.<sup>1</sup> The tenants of the servile lands, which must have been of small extent, may have been allowed to remain as tenants of the Abbey. For we know that even at this early period portions of the lands of other Cistercian monasteries in Scotland were let to tenants, though it was a violation of the original rules of the Order for its monks to subsist on rents or the produce of lands not occupied and laboured by themselves.

Queen Ermengarde's project was from the first warmly seconded by her son, Alexander II. Not only did he aid her by his advice, and by interesting himself in the erection of the monastic buildings, but by his own liberality he added

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<sup>1</sup> At Citeaux the serfs on the land, and also the church, were given over to the monks by their benefactors.



[illegible]



very considerably to the endowments of the rising house.<sup>1</sup> Indeed his gifts to it were fully as great as those of his mother. About the time of its foundation he bestowed on the Abbey the lands of Barry, anciently called Fethmure, Fethmoreth, or Fethmoref, which then belonged to the Crown, and where he himself was residing in the spring of the year 1229. This valuable grant included the whole parish of Barry, except thirteen acres which formed the glebe of its vicar, and had been previously conferred on the church of Barry by William Cumyn, Sheriff of Forfar, and with that church had been given to the Abbey of Arbroath by William the Lion.<sup>2</sup> The liberality of Alexander II., as we shall see, was not exhausted by this splendid gift. The foregoing statements show the inaccuracy of Boece's assertion that the Abbey of Balmerino—which he calls Abermoroenochtum—was founded by William the Lion.<sup>3</sup> As a native of Dundee, and educated there, he should have known better both the name of the place and that of the Foundress of its abbey.

The Foundation Charter was not executed till the 3rd of February 1230–31. It runs in the King's name. We give a translation of this document entire, as a specimen of the deeds by which property and privileges were usually conferred on the monastery. The dates of these charters, as they are not always given, are sometimes matter of conjecture. The charters are usually attested by numerous witnesses, whose names are set down in the order of their rank, bishops and abbots taking precedence of temporal barons. Though the witnesses were present, it was doubtless the scribe or a notary who wrote down the names of the laymen, as few of these, at least in the earlier periods of the Abbey's history, could

<sup>1</sup> 'Monasterium fundavit Ermengarda memorabilis femina, Alexandro filio non solum consulente, sed et adjuvante et promovente ædificia, munificentia in Religiosos inexhausta.'—(Father Hay in his MS. *Scotia Sacra* in Adv. Libr., quoting the *Liber de Cupro*, now lost.)

<sup>2</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 9, App. No. I.; *Reg. Vetus de Aberbr.*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Scot. Hist.*, fol. 279, p. 2 (ed. 1574).





practise the art of writing, which was then thought to be suitable only for churchmen. The donations are usually stated to be given 'in pure and perpetual charity' to God and the Blessed Mary, St. Edward, and the monks of the Cistercian Order serving God at Balmurynach; and for the weal of the donor and his family, of his ancestors and descendants, and sometimes of Queen Ermengarde, her husband, and son. The names of persons and places are, as in all ancient documents of a similar kind, frequently spelt different ways. The seal of the donor, and, in cases of sale or contract, the seal of each of the parties, or of one of them, or of his burgh if he was a citizen, was usually affixed to the document.

### Foundation Charter

ALEXANDER, by the grace of God King of the Scots, to the bishops, abbots, earls, barons, justices, sheriffs, provosts, ministers, and all good men both clergy and laity, of his whole kingdom, greeting. Let the present and future generations know that we, for the honour of God and of the glorious Virgin Mary, and of the most holy King Edward, and for the exaltation of holy religion; for our own weal and that of our predecessors and successors; and for the souls of the illustrious King William our father, and Queen Ermengarde our mother, and of all our predecessors and successors; have founded an Abbey of the Cistercian Order at Balmurynach in Fyff; and that to the monks of that Order who are and ever shall be serving God there we have given and granted, and by this our charter have confirmed the whole land of Cultrach and Balmurynach in Fyff with all their pertinents, namely, Ballindan and Ballindard and Corbi by their right boundaries; [we have also granted to them the Mother Church of Balmurynach and all its pertinents]<sup>1</sup> and with all other

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<sup>1</sup> The words within brackets are not in the printed Chartulary nor in the MS. from which it is copied. They are to be found in a facsimile of the Foundation Charter printed in Anderson's *Selectus Diplomatum Scotiæ* (A.D. 1739), from a copy furnished to him by Lord Balmerino; and also in a copy printed in *Illustrations of Scottish History from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Centuries* (Maitland



things justly belonging to the foresaid lands; which also Adam de Stawel, brother and heir of Richard Renel, has quit-claimed to us in our full court at Forfar towards the enterprise of the lady, Queen Ermengarde our mother, and resigned, for himself and his heirs, in our hand by staff and baton. We have also granted to the foresaid monks of the Cistercian Order, towards the founding of the foresaid Abbey, Fethmure in Anegus by its right boundaries, with all its just pertinents. And we and our heirs will maintain and warrant to the foresaid monks the foresaid lands, with all their pertinents and liberties, in perpetuity against all men. Wherefore our will is, that the foresaid monks have and hold from us and our successors all the foresaid lands in free, pure, quiet, and perpetual charity in respect of lands and waters, meadows and pastures, moors and marshes, dams and mills, roads and footpaths, saltworks and fishings, and all other easements justly pertaining to the foresaid lands, as freely and quietly, fully and honourably, as any other charity is held or possessed in the kingdom of Scotland; [exempt] from aids, armies, taxes, tolls, and all exactions, customs, and secular services, so that nothing whatsoever of these things can be demanded of them throughout the whole kingdom of Scotland except their prayers only. Witnesses, Andrew, Bishop of Moray; Walter Cumin, Earl of Meninteh (Menteith); Walter Olyfard, Justiciary of Laodonia (the country south of the Forth); Walter, son of Alan, Steward and Justiciary of Seocia (the district between the Forth and the Spey); Earl Patrick; Henry de Ballol; Thomas de Haya; John and Walter, his brothers; Thomas, son of Randolph; Galfrid and William de Nithyn, our clerks. At Claemanan, the third day of February, in the seventeenth year of our reign.<sup>1</sup>

This charter makes no mention of the right of 'free regality' or baronial jurisdiction, though this had been previously granted to the Renels. It was certainly possessed, however, by the Abbey at a subsequent period. Tytler, writ-

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Club). Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vol. ii. p. 105, contains a copy communicated by Sir James Balfour, and differing in several words from that in the printed Chartulary. It wants the words within brackets. There are copies of documents Nos. 5 and 6 of the Chartulary in the *Acts of Parl. of Scot.* also showing some verbal differences.

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 1.



ing of the thirteenth century, says that free regality may be presumed, on strong grounds, to have been enjoyed by every Religious house in the kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

The liberality of Queen Ermengarde and her son was speedily imitated, though in a less degree, by others. The following small donations were made to the Abbey soon after its foundation. Richard de Leicestria, a burgess of Perth, grants a piece of ground in the Saddlers' Street of that city, subject to an annuity of two and a half merks payable to himself during his lifetime. Walter, son of Alan, Steward of Scotland, grants another portion of ground in Perth, subject to a *reddendo*, payable to himself and his heirs, of two pounds of pepper and an equal quantity of cumin annually, payment of which was afterwards remitted by his son Alexander. Laurence, son of Widon, sells to the monks a piece of ground in Perth, in the street leading to the Inch, which he holds of the Bishop of Dunkeld, to whom a *reddendo* of a pound of pepper is payable annually, and who confirms the sale in the year 1231. A charter granted by John de Moravia, by which he renounces whatever right he has to this ground, and gives another piece adjacent to it, in the Watergate, may here be mentioned in this connection, though it was not granted till the year 1289.<sup>2</sup>

The good Queen had the satisfaction of seeing the erection and endowment of her Abbey thus far advanced before her death, which took place, according to the Chronicle of Melrose, on the 11th of February 1233-34. She was buried at Balmerino before the high altar of the Abbey Church, the King her son, and doubtless many of his nobles, being present at her funeral. She thus found a resting-place similar to that of her husband, who was buried before the high altar in Arbroath Abbey, which he had founded. All this was in strict accordance with the ideas of the time. The Queen's death and burial

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Scot.*, chap. vi.

<sup>2</sup> *Chartulary*, Nos. 22 27.



are thus narrated by Wynton in his *Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland* under the year 1233:—

‘ And the yhere neyst foluand,  
 Ernygere, quhylum off Scotland  
 Queyn, the Kyng Williamys wyff,  
 Deyd, and endyd had hyr lyff.  
 Off Balmwrynach in hyr day  
 Off mwnkys scho fowndyt the Abbay;  
 Thare wes hyr body wyth honwre,  
 Enteryd in halowyd sepulture.’<sup>1</sup>

Not content with spending a thousand merks during her lifetime on an undertaking which she had so much at heart, Queen Ermengarde by her Will had directed her executors to pay two hundred merks to Laurence of Abernethy, brother-in-law of Henry Reuel, in order to purchase from him the renunciation of his interest in the lands of Cultra, Ballindean, Ballindard, Corbie, and Balmerino. He accordingly executed a deed by which he acknowledged receipt of the money from her executors, and quit-claimed for himself and his heirs all right which he and they had or could have in these lands. It

<sup>1</sup> In his *Introduction* to the Balmerino Chartulary, Turnbull thinks that the terms of the Foundation Charter induce an inference that at the date of that charter, February 3, 1230-31, the Queen was dead. Such an inference is, however, doubtful. Her death is assigned to the year 1233 by Wynton and Fordun as well as by the Melrose Chronicle. But see below at p. 122. The fact of her *interment* at Balmerino is asserted by the Melrose Chronicle, by Wynton, and by the Register of Arbroath Abbey which also states that her son Alexander II. was present at it. Spottiswood (*Account of Religious Houses*) says that she was buried at Balmerino *ante magnum altare*, quoting from a copy of Laurence of Abernethy's charter different from that in the *Balmerino Chartulary*, No. 7, which does not mention the fact, though it is on all accounts probable.

The good Queen has been subjected, both in life and in death, to strange treatment by modern writers and printers. A well-known ‘Handbook for Travellers in Scotland’ has the following passage in a description of Arbroath Abbey: ‘The grave of William is pointed out in front of the high altar. . . . Next to him lay his wife Ermengarde, whose body was, after death, sewn up in leather and buried at Balmerino.’ The sole foundation for this ridiculous and incoherent story was the discovery of a piece of leather in what was supposed to be King William's tomb! In an esteemed ‘Gazetteer of Scotland’ it is stated that Ermengarde was *burned* before the high altar at Balmerino—a misprint for *buried*.





was witnessed by the King and several bishops and abbots, as well as other high functionaries.<sup>1</sup>

After Queen Ermengarde's death, Davit de Lynedsay of Brenweill (in Ayrshire) grants an annuity of twenty shillings from his mill of Kerchow, or Kerkow, for furnishing a *pitancia* or treat to the monks 'on the anniversary of my lady Ermengarde of good memory, late Queen of Scotland.' This gift received the royal confirmation at Kinross on the 28th of March 1233.<sup>2</sup> If this date is correct, the Melrose Chronicle cannot be so in assigning the Queen's death to the following February.

Alexander II. continued to show his interest in the Abbey, and made several visits to it. Thus we find him there on the 9th of April 1234, when he grants a charter remitting to the monks a yearly payment due to himself from a burgage in Crail, which they had purchased from certain of its townsmen.<sup>3</sup> On the following day the King, by a charter given at Balmerino—where he must have stayed over the preceding night—bestows on the Abbot and convent the privilege of holding their lands of Balmerino and Barry in 'forest' or 'free forest.' This valuable grant included the right of hunting, hawking, and killing all kinds of game, though such sports, being considered unsuitable for monks, were probably left, at least at first, to their lay brothers and servants. This charter shows how strictly game was preserved even in those remote times, since it subjects any one found cutting trees or *hunting* in the lands mentioned, without permission from the monks, to the very heavy penalty of 'full forfeiture of ten pounds.' On this visit there were present at the Abbey along with the King the Bishop of Glasgow, Chancellor, the Bishop of Dunblane, William son of Alan the Steward, Justiciary of Scotia, Laurence of Abernethy, and others.<sup>4</sup>

The King is again at Balmerino on the 31st of August

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 19, 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 35.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 8.



in the same year, accompanied by the Bishop of Moray, Alexander Cumyn Earl of Buchan, Justiciary of Scotia, Patrick Earl of Dunbar, Sir Nicolas Sowl, and Sir William Ramsay, when he grants a charter confirming to the monks the lands of Ballindean, Cultra, and Corbie by their right boundaries, which are thus defined: 'Beginning at the east side, namely, at Carneden, and proceeding along the Motrich, according to its ancient channel, as far as the stream coming from the Dolle; and thence ascending by the southern stream to the well; and ascending from the well northward to the hill; and thence proceeding westward to Mierkip; and thence along the top of the hill to the marsh on the east side of Creych; and thence descending by the ancient course of the stream in Corbiden to the water of Tay.' These boundaries, to define and record which was probably the chief purpose of this charter, seem to be identical with those of the Parish on its south and west sides at the present day.<sup>1</sup>

In 1235 Alexander II. confers another benefit on the monks. Religious houses always tried to evade the delivery of the tithes, *in kind*, of lands belonging to them, and to get a composition accepted in lieu of these. As early as the year 1230 an agreement had been made by the monks of Arbroath and those of Balmerino 'for confirming peace for ever between them,' whereby the latter were to pay to the former in good faith the tithes of any land, or other tithable subject, which they might possess in any parish whose church belonged to Arbroath Abbey, according to their value when they were acquired by them. This agreement was carried out in the case of Barry—to which it no doubt chiefly referred—whose lands now belonged to the Abbey of Balmerino, but its church, with its revenues, to that of Arbroath. Accordingly the tithes of Barry were at some time previous to 1233, with consent of the Bishop of St. Andrews, surrendered by the Abbey of Arbroath

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<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 56.



to that of Balmerino for a fixed annual payment by the latter of forty merks—an early instance of the valuation and commutation of tithes. Matters were in this state when the King came to Balmerino on the occasion of his mother's funeral. He then promised to relieve its monks from the payment of the forty merks by providing to Arbroath an equivalent from another source. Accordingly on Christmas Day 1235, being then at St. Andrews, he bestows on Arbroath Abbey an extensive tract of land at Tarves, in Aberdeenshire, amounting to four and three-fourths of the measure called a *davach*, or 1980 acres in all—of much greater value than the tithes of Barry. A charter is next granted by the monks of Arbroath setting forth that since the King, 'loving with a special affection and favour both monasteries—one of them rendered illustrious by the tomb of his father, and the other by that of his mother'—has provided an equivalent for the forty merks, they now release their brethren of Balmerino from the annual payment of that sum, and surrender to them the church of Fethmoreth with all its rights; and they undertake to be responsible for the episcopal and other burdens laid upon that church, it being understood that the chaplain (that is, the vicar) who shall serve the cure shall have the oxgate of land (thirteen acres) formerly assigned to him, as perambulated by Jocelyn of Balindard and Nicholas of Innerpefir.<sup>1</sup> Arbroath Abbey, however, still retained the patronage of the vicarage of Fethmoref, Fethmoreth, or Barry, and presentations of incumbents to it, addressed to the Bishop or Archbishop of St. Andrews in 1463, 1489, and 1533, are recorded in the Register of that house. The patronage subsequently passed—how it does not appear—to the Commendators of Balmerino after the Reformation, and then to Lord Balmerino, and afterwards to the Crown.

The practice thus exemplified in the case of Barry, and,

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 9, App. Nos. I., II., III.



as already stated, in that of Forgan, of increasing the revenues of monasteries—and the same method was adopted for endowing bishoprics and, in later times, colleges—by bestowing on them the tithes of parishes, on the condition that they should supply vicars to perform the spiritual duties of the cure, was in the Middle Ages a very common one. In some instances the vicar was maintained by a small money stipend, in others by the lesser tithes of hay, calves, lambs, butter, cheese, and other produce; while the bishop, college, or monastery, as occupying the place of rector of the parish, drew the great tithes of corn. The parochial system was not long established in Scotland ere its efficiency was greatly impaired by this practice. In the reign of William the Lion no fewer than thirty-three parish churches were conferred on the recently founded Tironensian Abbey of Arbroath. A great part of the revenues of Lindores Abbey was derived from a similar source. Comparatively few churches were, as a rule, given to Cistercian monasteries, as the statutes of that Order forbade its monks to obtain revenue in that way; yet twenty-nine parish churches were bestowed on Melrose Abbey. To so great an extent was this cheap liberality exercised, that at the Reformation Flisk was the only rectory or parsonage in the North of Fife, its incumbent being called the *parson* of Flisk. All the rest of the churches were vicarages, having been bestowed on some bishop, college, or religious house. Leuchars, like Forgan, had been given to St. Andrews Priory; Kilmany to St. Salvator's College, St. Andrews; Creich and Abdie to Lindores Abbey;<sup>1</sup> Dunbog to Arbroath Abbey;

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<sup>1</sup> It was in the year 1414 that the Pope granted the petition of the monks of Lindores to appropriate to them the Church of Creich, value £12, the grant to take effect on the death of the rector, Laurence de Lindores—a perpetual vicar, with a fit stipend being appointed to it—and the plea urged was that the buildings of the monastery were ruined, and its rents diminished by reason of the nearness of the wild (*silvestrium*) Scots. Who was the donor of Creich Church to the abbey does not appear.—(*Calendar of Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland: Petitions to the Pope*, vol. i.)





Moonzie to the Ministry of Scotlandwell. In Fife there were only nine, and in the whole of Scotland 293 rectories, all the other parish churches being vicarages.<sup>1</sup> The interests of the parishioners were thus sacrificed to other objects, by their pastor being reduced to a condition of dependence and poverty.<sup>2</sup>

The church of Logie-Murdoch was bestowed on Balmerino Abbey, but neither the name of the donor nor the date of the gift is known. It must have been given after the reign of Pope Innocent IV. (1242-54), since the Bull of protection which, we shall find, he granted to the Abbey does not mention that church among its possessions; and it must have been given previous to the year 1275, for at that date it was a vicarage. The Abbey would draw its tithes and appoint its vicar, who would be accountable to the Bishop of St. Andrews for the performance of his parochial duties, and be maintained by a small money stipend, or by the lesser tithes and church land.

The case of Balmerino parish church, which had been bestowed on the Abbey at its foundation, was peculiar, inasmuch as the whole parish was abbey property, excepting two small portions, namely, Thomas de Lundin's lands at Balmerino, and the fifteen acres called Priorwell, which Henry Reuel had given to the Priory of St. Andrews. The former of these portions, however, must have been at a later period acquired in some way by the Abbey, as it is never again mentioned as a separate property. The latter portion was most probably feued to the Abbey, the Priory still retaining its superiority. As Balmerino parish contained, in the

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<sup>1</sup> Keith's *Hist. of Church and State*, vol. iii. pp. 391, 509, 510 (Spottiswoode Soc. Ed.), where the names of the parsonages or rectories are given.

<sup>2</sup> Barry was one of fourteen parish churches belonging to Arbroath Abbey, the vicars of which complained to the Bishop of St. Andrews of the insufficiency of their means of subsistence.—*Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. i., A.D. 1342-1419, p. 235 (1878).



occupiers of these portions, *some* parishioners who were not connected with the Abbey when it was founded, and probably also hired servants and tenants of the Abbey who were not its inmates, the Bishop of St. Andrews would no doubt insist on the appointment of a vicar by the convent after the death of the existing incumbent. One of the monks would probably be appointed to the office, closely connected as *most* of the parishioners were with the Abbey; for, where this was not the case, it was not the practice of Benedictine and Cistercian monks, as it was of the Augustinian canons, to serve parish churches belonging to their monasteries. There is not, however, in the extant records of the Abbey any mention of a vicar of Balmerino, or of the old parish church after the arrival of the monks. The Abbey church would in all probability be used also as the *parish* church. Tithes would be paid to the convent, as occupying the position of rector, by the occupants of the non-monastic lands, and also by the tenants of the Abbey lands if this was made a condition of their occupation; but from the greater part of the parish there would be in *early* times no tithes drawn, as, in respect of the lands occupied and laboured by the monks, their lay brothers, and servants, the Abbey, like that of Melrose, was rector, landlord, and cultivator combined. (Before and near to the Reformation tithes were paid by some, at least, of the tenants or feuars.)

Abbot Alan ruled the convent only about six years and nine months, having died on the 28th of June 1236.<sup>1</sup> According to the *Book of Cupar* (Angus) he was reckoned in his time a very learned man, and was called St. Alan.<sup>2</sup> Thomas Dempster also, who wrote his *Ecclesiastical History of the Nation of the Scots* in the early part of the seventeenth

<sup>1</sup> *Chron. de Mailros*, p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> 'Consecravit initia nascentis domus S. Alanus, vir sua ætate doctissimus.' (Father Hay's *Scotia Sacra*, quoting the *Liber de Cupro*.)



century, and perhaps derived his information partly from the *Book of Cupar*, tells us that our Abbot was, 'without controversy, in his time a very learned and pious man'; and adds—what is probable enough—that it was his reputation in these respects which procured for him the distinction of being appointed the first Abbot of Balmerino.<sup>1</sup> This author, however, calls him St. Almus—having evidently misread in some manuscript the word Alanus—and then gravely informs us that the place 'which, from his name, was long called Almurenoch (which it never was!), afterwards, by a corruption of the word, began to be called Balmurenoch.' He also states that our abbot wrote two works, one of which was entitled *Concerning Religious Perfection*,<sup>2</sup> in one Book; the other, *The Acts of Queen Emergarde*,<sup>3</sup> in one Book; and that he died in the year 1270. For these statements he gives as his authority *The Acts of that Monastery*.<sup>4</sup> His derivation of the word Balmerino, the name he gives to Abbot Alan, and the year to which he assigns his death, may at once be put aside as palpably erroneous. As regards his statement that this Abbot wrote the two works which he names, it would be a very interesting one if we could be assured of its truth; but unfortunately Dempster, though himself a voluminous author and a man of great and varied learning, cannot always be relied on for what he records as facts. Like many of our oldest historians, who in this respect were no worse than those of other nations, he sometimes deemed it a patriotic duty to sacrifice truth to the supposed glory of his country. Not only does he set down many Irish and English saints and writers as Scotsmen, but records the titles of books which he asserts that they wrote, of the existence of which we have no other evidence. It is indeed possible that he may have had access

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<sup>1</sup> *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Scotorum*, vol. i. p. 54 (Bann. Club Ed.).

<sup>2</sup> *De Perfectione Religiosa*.

<sup>3</sup> *Acta Regine Emergarde*.

<sup>4</sup> *Acta illius Monasterii*.



to Chronicles and other monastic writings which are now, like the *Book of Cypar*, lost. Yet we cannot be quite sure that Abbot St. Alan wrote the books which Dempster ascribes to him. The supposition that he did write them is, however, not in itself improbable; and *The Acts of the Monastery of Balmerino* may well have been the work of one of its monks. Would that this History, if it ever existed, had come down to us!





## CHAPTER V

### A DAY AT THE ABBEY

‘ Silence listened to the frequent chant  
Of stated hymn that from the Abbey rose  
By nights, and days as still as any nights.’

—WILSON.

THE Abbey having been founded, and occupied for several years, the daily life of its inmates, according to the Cistercian usages, may now be described in its details.

During winter (which was reckoned from the 1st of November to Easter) on ‘private’ days—those which were neither Sundays nor chief festivals—the usual routine of duty was as follows:—

At two hours past midnight the sacristan, who did not sleep in the dormitory with the rest of the brethren, but in or near the church, being awakened by the clock, which was also an alarm and had been set by him at the proper time on the previous evening, rings the convent bell.<sup>1</sup> He then trims the two lamps which burn all night—one in the dormitory and the other in the church—lights a third one in the cloister if necessary, and opens the church doors. The monks, roused from sleep by the bell, rise for the night service, or Nocturns. Not needing to spend time in dressing themselves, as they sleep in their ordinary clothes with the exception of the scapular, they at once issue forth from the dormitory, and in their night-shoes and white robes glide

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<sup>1</sup> Such an alarm clock was placed in the Cistercian monastery of Kinloss, by its Abbot, in the early part of the sixteenth century.—(Stuart’s *Rec. Kinloss*, p. xlvi.)



along the passage till they reach the broad stair by which they descend into the north transept of the church,

‘ All, all observant of the sacred law  
Of silence.’

Having thrown back their hoods and bowed to any altar which they may pass, and then to the high altar, most of them enter the choir at its upper end, and take their places in the rows of stalls placed along its two sides. The Abbot and those who are to sit near him enter at the lower end of the choir, where his stall is on the right-hand side, and that of the Prior on the left. They first say the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed, resting on the misericords,<sup>1</sup> and then proceed with the regular service, standing in their white robes with their arms crossed (*cancellatis*) on their breasts, or sitting with their hands folded on their knees, or bowing profoundly, as prescribed by the rules at particular times. They chant the Psalms and anthems, and on certain occasions pronounce even the Scripture lessons, not from books, but by heart; for the church is too dimly lighted by the single lamp to admit of reading; and when the lessons have to be read, this is done with a candle placed at the desk. Even at the day-services only those are permitted to read the Psalms who have not yet committed them to memory. ‘The sweet chanting of the early Cistercians struck some of their contemporaries as something supernatural. “With such solemnity and devotion do they celebrate the divine office,” says Stephen of Tournay, “that you might fancy that angels’ voices were heard in the concert.” Yet this effect was simply produced by the common Gregorian chants sung in unison; as in other parts of divine worship, the Cistercians were reformers in

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<sup>1</sup> The *misericord* or *miserere* was a projection on the under side of the seat; so shaped that when the seat was folded back the misericord formed a small seat on a higher level, giving some support to a person resting on it, half standing, half sitting. This arrangement may still be seen in the stalls of mediæval churches.



church music. . . . The men of that time believed that devils trembled, and angels noted down in letters of gold the words which dropped from their lips, as these grave and masculine voices chanted through the darkness of the night the triumph of good over evil, and the glories of the Lord and His Church.<sup>1</sup>

With the exception of certain of the officials, those who are not present at the prefatory parts which are said before the regular service begins have to beg pardon on their knees in the chapter. Any one entering after the second Psalm is not allowed to join with the others, but must stand aside, and afterwards do penance for his fault till he is restored by the Abbot. Even the Abbot himself, if not present at the *Gloria Patri* of the first Psalm, must do penance on his knees like any other monk, with this exception, that when he has done so he retires to his stall without asking leave from any one, unless another Abbot happens to be present, who may give him leave.

When Nocturns are concluded, be the night as cold and dreary as it may, the monks do not return to their beds. They may remain in their stalls in the church for secret prayer, but do not read there, nor sit with their heads covered; or they may sit and read in the chapter-house, a light being kindled in it by the server of the church, and another before the ambry, where the books are kept by the chantor. Any who have yet something of the Psalter to learn now apply themselves to this task. Those engaged in reading, whether in the chapter-house at this time or in the cloister during the intervals between the day-services, must wear their hoods on their heads in such a way as to let it be seen whether they are asleep or awake. Each must sit devoutly reading his own book, except those who are studying something which they have to sing in divine service, or

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<sup>1</sup> Dalgairn's *Life of St. Stephen Harding*.



who are preparing the lessons, which the chantor is to hear them repeating. They may not disturb each other by asking questions, except about long and short accents, or words they do not know, or the beginnings of the lessons at table, Collation, or Nocturns; and such questions must be as brief as possible. If any one has to go away for a time, he replaces his book in the ambry, or leaves it on the seat, and makes a sign to the monk sitting beside him to take charge of it. No one is allowed to make signs with his hood, or to call another at a distance by voice or sound. If any one gives offence to another to whom he has not been in the habit of speaking, the latter is to tell it to the Prior, who may call the offender and order him to lie on the ground before the feet of the complainer till he is pacified, when he has to raise him up. If one requires to get from another a book from which he reads or sings, and the latter refuses to give it, the other is to bear the refusal quietly till he can accuse the offender in the chapter. During these intervals between the church services the brethren may enter the calefactory—where the infirmarer has made a fire after Nocturns, or Lauds, or Prime—to warm themselves or for other useful purposes; But no one may enter the kitchen or refectory excepting those officers whose duties render this necessary. The auditories are not to be entered except by those who may require to consult the Prior about some matter after they have, by a sign or sound at the door, asked his leave to enter; nor are more than two together allowed to speak there in time of reading, unless the Prior chooses to call a greater number, and when their business is finished, they must at once depart. Two aged monks are appointed for a year to go round the cloister during reading-time, and to enter the kitchen, refectory, and calefactory, to see that the brethren are not idling or talking. If during these intervals the monks walk in the cloister, they must walk humbly, uncovering their heads and bowing to each other in passing. And always when they





service. He then reads a lesson from the Rule of St. Benedict ; after which he announces from the Table or Register—if it be a day for doing so—the weekly duties assigned to individual monks. Each one, on hearing his name called out, bows in token of obedience. If a duty has been prescribed to a brother who for any reason cannot perform it, he craves exemption ; but he is not permitted to ask this when outside of the chapter-house, unless an unavoidable necessity has arisen for his doing so ; in which case he must state the cause in next day's chapter, and on bended knees ask forgiveness from the Abbot. Then follows the commemoration of all the deceased brethren and servants of the Order, and the Abbot says, 'May they rest in peace!' to which the convent respond *Amen*. The lesson which was read from the Rule is now expounded by the Abbot, or by some brother at his request. The exposition being ended, the Abbot says, 'Let us speak concerning our Order'; and the chantor having commemorated any deceased person who is to be absolved, the Abbot pronounces his absolution. The chantor then intimates the completion of the *tricenarium*, or period of thirty days—if that period has elapsed—since the funeral of any member of the convent, during which prayers and masses were said for him ; he also reads the announcement of the death of any monk of another monastery, if such has been transmitted ; the Abbot says in regard to each of them, 'May he rest in peace!' and all having said *Amen*, he prescribes, in accordance with Roman Catholic doctrine, what he thinks necessary for the repose of the departed souls. Any one who knows that he has transgressed the Rule then comes forward to the place in the middle of the chapter-house called the *Judicium* or Judgment, prostrates himself on the floor, and confesses his fault ; and the Abbot, having prescribed a suitable penance, bids him return to his seat.

Now commences a strange part of conventual discipline—the *clamatio* or accusation of offenders—when any monk may stand up and charge another with whatever delinquency he



has seen or heard him commit, or of which he has been informed. No one can be accused on mere suspicion; nor is the accuser allowed to use circumlocution, but, naming the brother, he must say plainly, 'He did this.' The accused, on hearing his name, does not reply from his seat, but comes forward to the *Judicium*, where he prostrates himself on the floor. If the Abbot asks him, 'What say you?' he replies if guilty, 'It was my fault' (*Mea culpa*), and at the Abbot's order stands up, humbly confesses his fault, and promises amendment for the future. If he declares his innocence, his accuser is not to repeat the charge unless the Abbot orders him to do so. But any brother who knows him to be guilty may give his evidence. When the trial is ended, and penance if necessary prescribed, the accused resumes his seat, and is not allowed to bring a charge against his accuser on the same day. For lighter faults the penalty is exclusion from table, and from intoning the Psalms and reading the lessons in the choir; and the culprit has to take his meals after the rest. For graver offences he is excluded from both table and church: no one may keep company with him or speak to him: he must work and take his food alone: and no passer by may bless him. During the canonical services he has to lie with his face on the ground before the church door, and throw himself at the feet of the Abbot, and then at the feet of all the rest as they issue from the church, that they may pray for him; and he must continue to do so till the Abbot is pleased to restore him. For very heinous offences a monk may be flogged in the chapter; but the punishment is never to be inflicted by his accuser. The culprit stands up in the *judicium*, and, on his being ordered by the Abbot, immediately sits down there, puts off his cowl and lays it before him on his knees; then strips his body bare above his girdle, and with head bent low says this only and repeatedly, 'It was my fault, I will amend me.' The rod is then applied, while the convent look on in silence, unless some one of the seniors intercedes for him. The brother



who inflicts the punishment continues to do so till the Abbot bids him cease, and then he helps the culprit to replace his clothes. The latter now stands up and remains motionless till dismissed by the Abbot, when he bows and retires to his place. A monk is never to be flogged by one of an inferior grade—as a priest by a deacon—but his punishment is to be inflicted by an equal or superior. Offences, or any secret matters dealt with in the chapter, are never to be alluded to by word or sign outside of it. With the exception of the Abbot, Prior, and some of the senior monks who have obtained the Abbot's consent to speak in the chapter, no one may presume to do so unless when he accuses another, or is himself accused, or has to make confession that he has lost something, or wishes to put a question concerning the Order, or is commanded to speak, or is interrogated, by the Abbot. When the business of the chapter is concluded, all rise and turn to the east; and the Abbot says, 'Our help is in the name of the Lord.' The convent responds, 'Who hath made heaven and earth.' They then all bow and depart, unless any remain for confession to the Abbot, or to the Prior acting for him, in order to obtain priestly absolution, which may be accompanied with counsel, rebuke, or the imposition of penance.

Chapter being ended, the monks make themselves ready for manual labour, to which, however, they devote somewhat less time each day than the Rule of St. Benedict enjoins, as they have to attend daily mass and chapter, neither of which was instituted till after his time. When the Prior strikes the Table,<sup>1</sup> all except the infirm and those appointed to certain duties assemble; and before setting out, the Prior prescribes in the auditorium the work to be done by each. He then distributes to them their tools, and either he himself or a substitute walks before, and an aged monk behind them, both

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<sup>1</sup> This Table (*tabula*) seems to have been a board struck by a wooden mallet on various occasions, and especially during Passion week, when bell ringing was suspended.



in going to and in returning from the place of work. The signal for proceeding thither or for returning, and for beginning or ending an interval of rest, is to be made by any kind of sound rather than by the voice. The Rule prescribes that while at work, as well as on all other occasions, they are not only to have humility in their hearts, but are to show it 'by having their heads bowed down and their eyes fixed on the ground.' While on their way to the field, or to other place of work, they are not permitted to make many signs to each other, still less to speak, unless briefly and in an undertone or whisper to the Prior, in a place apart, about any necessary matter connected with their employment. A similar prohibition is laid on the brethren who are left behind in the monastery, excepting the cooks, those employed in the correction of manuscripts or in the refectory, and such others as have obtained license to speak while busy at some duty which cannot be performed in silence. No one may carry a book to the place of work, or read there. When the warning bell for Sext is heard, labour is at once suspended. If they happen to be working in the monastery, or within the precincts, they lay aside or bear to its destination any burden they may be carrying, and hasten to the service in church. If working beyond the precincts, so that it is inexpedient to repair to the church, they sing the Hour where they are. In either case they resume their employment as soon as the service, which on such occasions may be shortened, is finished, and continue working till near the time for None, when they return to the monastery. They then replace their tools where they are usually kept, or deliver them to the Prior, except—at a later season of the year—those used in hoeing, haymaking, and reaping, which, as well as the instruments required for shaving, each monk keeps beside his own bed in the dormitory as long as these operations last. When the workers arrive from the field, if None is already commenced by those left behind in the monastery, the former, following the Prior, enter the church and







A MONK IN HIS SCAPULAR, OR WORKING DRESS.



there ‘satisfy,’ that is, do penance for being late, by kneeling on the floor in front of the step till the service is ended, unless they are permitted to enter their stalls, where they ‘satisfy by prostration on the joints of their hands.’

None being concluded when it is nearly three o’clock, the bell is rung for dinner, and the brethren repair to the lavatory to wash and wipe their hands—the wiping is expressly mentioned on this and other occasions—and then enter the refectory. The Prior presides at dinner, as the Abbot is dining in the guest-hall, and entertaining the strangers if any are present. When the monks arrive in front of their seats they bow to the Prior’s table, which is on a higher level than the others, and then stand up awaiting his entrance. If he delays his coming, which he has to be careful not to do unless it is unavoidable, those who choose may meanwhile sit down; for they are faint with hunger, not having broken their fast—with the exception of the few who were allowed to have *mixtum*—since the same hour of the previous day, to say nothing of the hard work they may have been doing. When the Prior enters he bows in front of his seat, and strikes a small bell as long as to permit the brethren to say the *Miserere*—the fifty-first Psalm—before it ceases to sound. Then follows a short liturgical service, which is concluded by the priest asking a blessing. As this service commences with a sentence of Scripture, it is briefly termed ‘the verse,’ and any one who enters too late to hear the service is said to ‘lose the verse,’ and he who loses it a third time is deprived of his drink, and has to eat his dinner outside the refectory. The meal, as has been already stated, consists of a pound of coarse bread for each monk, a small measure of wine or beer—at Balmerino no doubt the latter—and two dishes of vegetables boiled with salt, but without fat. The reason assigned by St. Benedict for allowing the monks two such dishes was, that those who might be unable to eat of the one might make their meal of the other; from which it may be inferred that they were not very attractive messes even



after a twenty-four hours' fast. When the monks entered the refectory, napkins and spoons, and the bread and drink had been already placed on the tables by the refectorer, and before the bell was struck the boiled dishes, in two plates for each monk, had been served by the cellarer and cooks; if not, they are now handed round. Three portions are set down—strange to say—for monks of the Order who have died, which are afterwards taken away by the porter and distributed at the gate to the poor. The cellarer also carries round any 'pittance,' or dainty, which the Abbot may have ordered to be given, out of compassion, to certain of the brethren and to the *minuti*—those who have been recently bled. There was, every year, a 'pittance' for all on the anniversary of Queen Ermengarde the Foundress. Conversation, or even whispering at table, is strictly forbidden; but during the whole time of dinner the reader, having received the benediction from the Prior, reads aloud from the lectern lessons from the Scriptures or some edifying book. No one is permitted to walk about while eating, or to wipe his hands with the cloth, or to wipe his knife with it unless he has first cleaned it with his bread. Salt is to be taken with a knife. In drinking, the cup must be held with both hands. If anything is wanting, it is asked by a sign from the cooks or cellarer, and giver and receiver bow to each other. He to whom the Prior sends anything bows first to the bearer, and then rises and bows to the Prior. No one, except a guest at the Abbot's table, may give any portion of his common food—which is called *the general*—to another; but he who has received a pittance may share it with one or two brethren on his right and left hand—a liberty denied, however, to the *minuti* and the infirm, who must not part with the good things they have obtained. Of the allowance of drink no portion is to be given away. If any one, while dining or serving, has committed a fault, he has to kneel at the step in front of the Prior's seat, and when the latter makes a sound with his knife in token of forgiveness, the culprit rises up, bows, and returns to his



place. When dinner is ended the Prior orders the reading to cease, and strikes his bell; the monks stand up and another 'verse' follows. This being concluded, they bow, and go out two by two, chanting the Miserere—the right and left sides of the choir taking alternate parts—the juniors walking first, and the Prior bringing up the rear. They thus walk in procession to the church, where they finish their thanksgiving, and having bowed to the high altar reverently retire. The novices dine by themselves in the cloister at the same time as the monks; after which they prepare dinner for those who, having 'lost the verse,' must eat outside of the refectory.

The bell is now rung to call to dinner the 'servants,' that is, the officials whose duties prevented them from dining with the convent—the cooks, cellarer, reader, porter, and others—some of whom, however, had previously had *mixtum*. In the absence of the Abbot and Prior grace is said by the oldest monk of the company, unless there is present one of a higher clerical grade. There is a short lesson before and after the meal, and the Miserere is said by way of thanksgiving; but the servants do not, like the other monks, repair to the church to return thanks.

The *conversi*, or lay brothers, dine in their own refectory. Their meal also is preceded by a brief religious service—the senior brother and the company reciting alternate parts. For 'losing the verse' they are punished in the same way as the monks. When the meal is concluded there is another short service. They then enter the church—where they occupy the space expressly allotted to them—say the Lord's Prayer in a low voice, cross themselves, and depart. The dinner of the converts' 'servants' follows. These, like the monks' servants, finish their religious exercise at table without entering the church. At the Grange, the lay brothers after their meal conclude their thanksgiving in the oratory.

Between dinner and Vespers the monks are occupied in reading. In the middle of winter this interval is brief, as





Vespers are probably always said before the day is so far gone as to render lights necessary. Both at Lauds and at Vespers the Lord's Prayer is said aloud by the Abbot, to remind the brethren of the duty of mutual forgiveness of injuries. At the other Hours, and also at meals, it is said by all in secret except the last petition. The Abbot or priest then says aloud, 'And lead us not into temptation,' and the monks respond, 'But deliver us from evil.'<sup>1</sup>

During Lent they work on continuously, except while saying Sext and None, till four o'clock, and do not dine till after Vespers—about five o'clock. On the first Sunday in Lent the chantor distributes to each monk some edifying book, which he has to read all through before Easter.

After Vespers the monks sit in silence in the cloister, and this time of rest after the day's work is ended is greatly prized, as giving them leisure for reading and meditation. Nothing is permitted which may disturb their repose. They are not allowed to beat their garments with a rod, or to read aloud, or sing, or even make signs to each other, except for strictly necessary purposes, such as when any one is called at the instance of the Abbot or Prior, or requests the brother who is sitting beside him to take charge of his book in his absence.

During this interval of rest, however, the bell is rung by the sacristan, and the monks assemble in the refectory to have a drink—of water. When they arrive in front of their seats they bow and enter the tables, remaining standing till the Prior is seated, who then strikes his bell, and the priest gives the benediction. A cup is first offered to the Prior, then to the seniors, after which any monk may advance to the step and beg leave to drink. This having been granted, as indicated by the Prior giving one stroke on the bell, he

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<sup>1</sup> It was part of the *arcani disciplina* of the early Church to say both the Creed and Lord's Prayer in secret, lest they should be known by the uninitiated, and thus be the occasion of persecution to the faithful.



returns to his seat and drinks. When all who wish have quenched their thirst, the Prior strikes the bell three times, and the company rise, bow, and depart. Attendance at this *bibere*, as the drinking is called, is imperative on all except certain of the officials; and every other absentee has to satisfy in next day's chapter. Any one, however, may ask permission to enter the refectory to drink during any time of reading—the application being made to an aged monk who sits at the door of the refectory. Whosoever, previous to this *bibere* or to a similar one in summer after None, has lost any article must now satisfy for his fault; and he who loses anything after it has to satisfy in next day's chapter.

By-and-by the monks assemble in the cloister for the reading called the Collation, which is performed by the weekly reader. When it is ended, all rise and turn to the east; the Abbot says, 'Our help is in the name of the Lord,' and the convent add, 'Who hath made heaven and earth.'

They now enter the church to sing Compline, the last of the canonical Hours. At its conclusion they say the Lord's Prayer and Creed. The Abbot then sprinkles each of the brethren with holy water as they retire.

The table is now struck, and the two monks who in the chapter on the previous Sunday were appointed to the weekly office of washing the feet of the strangers—if there are any in the monastery—put on their scapulars and are conducted to them by the hospitaller. Having thrown back their hoods, the senior monk washes their feet, and the junior wipes them. On the following evening the junior washes and the senior wipes; and so on alternately during their week of duty. They then wash and wipe their own hands; after which, on bended knees, and with their hands resting on the floor, they say before the strangers, 'We have received Thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of Thy temple.' Then rising up they bow, draw their hoods over their heads, and depart.

The rest of the brethren, issuing from the church, and



having replaced their hoods on their heads, at once enter the dormitory in silence—for speaking after Compline is strictly forbidden—and go to bed, in winter about seven o'clock. They sleep in their hoods, cowls, girdles, tunics, stockings, and night-shoes, that they may be always in readiness to rise. But lest they should wound themselves in their sleep, they lay aside the knife which during the day is always carried at their side. Each monk has a bed to himself, with a straw-mattress and a rug spread over it, a coverlet of coarse woollen cloth, and a pillow which must not exceed a foot and a half in length or breadth. They are not permitted to climb into bed standing, but must sit down on it and then turn their feet round. And so ends a winter's day at the Abbey.

During summer, reckoned from Easter to the 1st of November, the round of duty is somewhat different from the foregoing. Till the 14th of September, except on certain days, it is as follows:—At Nocturns no lessons are read from a book, the nights being too short for this; but one from the Old Testament is said by heart. In the brief interval between Nocturns and Lauds, the weather being now warmer than in winter, the monks may sit in the cloister instead of the chapter-house and read, with light kindled by the server of the church if it is necessary. When Lauds have been said, they put on their day-shoes and take their knives. After Prime the chapter is held. When this is ended the monks proceed to their work, which is continued till they hear the warning bell for Terce; and during the interval between this and the commencement of the service they may go to confession in the chapter-house, or into the church for secret prayer, or they may spend their time in reading. Terce is followed by mass. They then sit in the cloister and read till the time for Sext, near noon. After Sext dinner immediately follows, and when this is finished, all enter the dormitory and rest on their beds, or sleep, or read in silence for



about an hour till two o'clock. This is called their *meridian*. The sacristan, when roused by the alarm clock which he had set at that hour, rings the bell to awaken the convent. The cooks hasten to place water in the lavatory for washing hands, and in the refectory for drinking; and the monks, having arisen and washed, either enter the choir of the church, or sit in the cloister till the commencement of None, about half-past two o'clock. When this service is concluded, they have their afternoon *bibere*. For this purpose they walk out of the church, two by two, into the refectory in the order in which they have been standing in the choir—the juniors first and the Prior last; and the rest of the procedure is nearly the same as at the winter *bibere*. They then go to work till Vespers, about five o'clock, and at the conclusion of this service they repair to the refectory for supper. This meal, to which there is nothing corresponding in winter or on fast-days, consists usually of apples, raw vegetables, or similar light fare, along with the remainder of their ration of bread. For when there is to be supper, the cellarer keeps back at dinner-time a third part of the daily pound of bread; and to those who then ate the whole of their allowance of two-thirds, he now gives, in addition to the remaining third, especially when their work has been hard, some of a coarser kind if it can be had.

During haymaking and harvest chapter is immediately followed by mass, after which the monks go to work in the fields. In harvest they may go, if necessary, even before Prime, and those of the infirm who are able to go to church assist at mass. When this is concluded the officiating priest and inferior clerics follow the rest to the fields. They continue working till Sext, and then dine where they work. If they are at a distance from the church they may work on till after the bell for Vespers, and this service may even be delayed till a later time than usual. Having sung Vespers, like the other Hours, in the field, they return to the monastery. But





the Prior may leave some of them in the field even after Vespers, in which case they must return from work in time to sup with the servants. At this season a pound and a half of bread is given to each monk, with one dish of cooked food at dinner and another at supper if it can be had; but for one of these dishes milk may be substituted.

Supper is immediately followed by Collation, and this by Compline, and then the brethren retire to the dormitory, about eight o'clock. They have thus only six hours for sleep till two o'clock next morning, when they must rise to Nocturns—an hour less than in winter, the difference being made up by their sleep at mid-day.

Such is the order of procedure from Easter to the 14th of September, except on Wednesdays and Fridays after Whitsunday. These two days in every week during that period, and all private days from the 14th of September till the 1st of November, are kept as fast-days, when, as during winter, there is only one meal, which is not taken till after None unless the convent is at work in the fields or the summer heat is great, in which cases they dine at noon. On these summer fast-days the monks after Sext have their meridian sleep till two o'clock. They then put on their scapulars and wash their hands, and when the table is struck go to work till they hear the warning bell for None; and till this service commences they are occupied in reading. After None they enter the refectory to dine, and spend the remainder of the day as in winter.

If a monk is sent on a journey it must be solely on business connected with the convent. Before setting out he communicates at mass; and unless his destination is the Grange, or some other dependency of the Abbey, from which he is to return on the same day, he also receives from the priest the benediction, which, however, may be given at all canonical Hours except Compline. If he hears the warning bell for any Hour, or for chapter or collation, before he has passed out through the Abbey



gate, he must come back for that function. If he hopes to return the same day, he must eat no food out of the monastery, even if asked to do so, unless the Abbot has given him express permission. Neither before nor after his journey is he, without leave, to speak to any one; nor is he to tell on his return anything he may have seen or heard outside the monastery. While travelling he must sing the Hours, which, after having first knelt at prayer, he usually does standing, unless he is riding, in which case he sings them on horseback. He must obey the Rule as regards fasts and food, and also as regards bedding if he is absent over night. He must not speak at table, or eat fat, or sleep in a bed of feathers, unless straw or some similar material cannot be procured without great labour or expense. Both the Abbot and monks when travelling may carry with them a pillow, and also a rug, but it must be neither valuable nor ornamental. The traveller on his return goes at once into the church, takes part in the service if it is then being sung, and receives the benediction. If no Hour is being sung, he prays outside of the choir; and if he finds the church shut, he prays outside the door. If he returns to the monastery while the dinner bell is being rung, he must enter the refectory along with the convent, otherwise he loses the verse.

An incident of frequent occurrence at the Abbey is the arrival of a stranger. The Rule of St. Benedict enjoins that strangers be received like Christ Himself, for He will say 'I was a stranger, and ye took Me in.' At their arrival and departure 'let Christ, who is indeed received in their persons, be adored in them by the bowing of the head, or even the prostration of the whole body on the ground. Let special care be taken in the reception of the poor and strangers, because in them Christ is more truly welcomed. For the very fear men have of the rich procures them favour.' But the Rule forbids the monks to associate or converse with strangers, unless they are ordered or have obtained leave to do so.



When a stranger knocks at the Abbey gate the porter answers, 'Thanks be to God,' opens the gate, and humbly salutes him with a *Benedicite*. He then asks him who he is and what he wants. If satisfied on these points, he bows and admits him, bids him sit down, and goes to announce him to the Abbot, who sends one or two fit persons to receive him. These, taking a book with them, when they meet the stranger uncover their heads and kneel before him. They then lead him into the church, where, having sprinkled him with holy water, they pray with him. If the stranger is an Abbot or a Bishop other than their own, he sprinkles himself. A lesson from Scripture is then read, and, if he desires it, expounded to him; after which he is conducted to the guest-hall. The Abbot may break his fast for the sake of a guest, unless it is a principal fast-day, on which it cannot be broken. Certain magnates are received with greater ceremony. If the Bishop of the diocese comes, the bell is rung; the monks assemble in the choir of the church, and a procession is formed. The Abbot, followed by the priests and the rest of the convent walking two by two, with holy water carried before them, marches out to meet the Bishop. On his approach they kneel before him, and when they rise the Abbot kisses his hand to the Bishop, who sprinkles himself with the holy water. Chanting a Psalm they return in reverse order to the church—the Abbot going last and leading the Bishop by the hand—and after prayer he conducts him into the chapter-house, where all sit down. A monk reads the lesson. The Abbot kisses the Bishop and his company, unless the Bishop wishes first to say something for the edification of the convent. The Bishop, at the Abbot's request, then gives the benediction, and all having said *Amen*, he is led into the guest-hall.

When the Abbot himself returns from a long journey—as from attendance at the General Chapter at Cîteaux—he is welcomed home again in the manner now described. But it was not the custom of Cistercian monks to receive in solemn



procession any except the Bishop of the diocese, a Papal legate, the King, the Pope, or their own Abbot; and for none of these except the Pope was such a procession made oftener than once. If his Holiness ever came to Balmerino Abbey, the Muse of history has neglected to record the fact! But the Bishop or Archbishop of St. Andrews had to come from time to time for the purpose of installing a new Abbot, or of conferring holy orders on the monks; and visits of the Sovereign were not very rare occurrences. Any such guest was, on his first visit only, received in solemn procession.

On Saturdays throughout the year there is a general cleaning and 'reddin' up' in the domestic apartments of the monastery, including the washing of towels for hands and feet. All this is performed by the outgoing cooks, who also in the evening deliver the kitchen dishes and utensils to the cellarer, and he numbers and delivers them to the incoming cooks who are to commence their duties on Sunday morning. Of the Abbot's two cooks, the one who has completed his week delivers to the other the keys and contents of their kitchen. Every Saturday evening also, the general cooks, both outgoing and incoming, wash and wipe in the cloister the feet of the brethren. The Abbot is the first to put off his shoes; the others then do the same; but they must cover as much as they can their naked feet with their cowls, and take care that these members are not seen more than is necessary—an injunction which also applies when in cold weather the monks warm their toes in the calefactory. When feet-washing is finished, the washers and the washed, the wipers and the wiped, make their bow to each other.

On Sundays and chief festivals during the year there are several special usages. There being no servile work done on such days, the intervals between the canonical services are wholly devoted to reading, prayer, and meditation; and those who have been appointed to any duty must return to their reading as soon as they have performed it. The monks rise





for Nocturns earlier than on private days, and this service is immediately followed by Lauds. On the other hand, there is an interval between Lauds and Prime. Mass comes next, at which all communicate who can conveniently do so; those who are prevented by any hindrance communicate at morning mass on other days; and the communion is given in both kinds. Mass is followed by the meeting of the chapter, the proceedings at which usually include a sermon. In the chapter on Sundays also the outgoing cooks state what things, if any, have gone amiss during their week of office, and satisfy for their faults connected therewith. In addition to the morning mass there is high mass at a later hour on all Sundays and numerous festivals, and at its conclusion the weekly reader receives from the officiating priest the benediction, which was previously given to the outgoing and incoming cooks after Lauds. Every Sunday also the priest blesses water, with some salt added, and the 'holy water' thus provided is sprinkled round the altar, and on the presbytery, chapter-house, and the various domestic apartments; and also on the Abbot and all the inmates of the monastery. The *conversi* or lay brothers hold their chapter after morning mass while the monks are holding theirs, on all Sundays except those on which a 'general sermon' is given in the monks' chapter, which they have to attend; and also on certain festivals; but they hold no chapter on private days. The Abbot or some one deputed by him presides at their chapter, and preaches a sermon to them. The other proceedings are somewhat similar to those in the monks' chapter, and include voluntary confession of faults and the accusation of offenders.

Of other rites and ceremonies practised in connection with the greater Church festivals only some of the more noteworthy need be here mentioned, as most of them were not peculiar to monachism or the Cistercian form of it, but were derived from the Roman ritual then in use throughout



the whole Western Church. On the night of Christmas the cellarer provides two of the lay brothers to make a fire in the calefactory to warm the monks between the services, if the weather is so cold as to render this necessary. On Ash Wednesday the monks enter the church with naked feet, and the Abbot blesses the ashes which have been placed in the presbytery, sprinkles them with holy water, and strews them on the heads of the monks as they kneel on the floor, to admonish them 'to be mindful of their corruption.' The ashes are strewed by the Prior on the heads of the youths and guests. On Palm Sunday the monks walk in procession round the cloister carrying the branches which have been blessed; and on many other occasions there are processions without this accompaniment. On Maundy Thursday — so called from our Lord's command (*mandatum*) to His disciples — the monks wash, wipe, and kiss the feet of the poor; after which, having washed their own hands, on bended knees they give to each of them a piece of money. They then rise up, and again kneel before the poor, saying, 'We have received, O God, Thy loving-kindness in the midst of Thy temple.' The poor are afterwards conducted to the guest-hall, where the Abbot and his assistants pour water on their hands, and give a dinner of bread and boiled vegetables to them, and also, 'out of reverence for our Lord's command,' to all who may come that day. The monks, novices, and lay brothers have also, after dinner, their own Maundy, when the Abbot and his assistants, girt with towels, wash, wipe, and kiss the feet of the whole convent; the Abbot taking the lead by performing these offices to four monks, four novices, and four lay brothers; and if there are not that number of novices in the monastery, the deficiency is supplied from the converts. Lastly, the Prior washes, wipes, and kisses the feet of the Abbot. On Good Friday, after Prime, the monks enter the chapter-house with naked feet, and there chant the Psalter from beginning to end. Afterwards the Abbot,



monks, novices, and lay brothers proceed to the church, and lying their whole length on the floor of the presbytery, adore and kiss the Cross as the symbol of salvation. On Holy Saturday all the lights are extinguished, and afterwards kindled from the fire which has been blessed; and this Paschal light is kept burning till Ascension day. The three days following Easter are devoted to reading, the brethren being exempted from manual labour 'out of veneration for the holy Resurrection.'

But even monks must die. When one is at the point of death, he is laid on the floor on a rug, beneath which has been placed a mat or a little straw sprinkled with ashes in the form of a cross. The table is then repeatedly struck, and the convent bell is tolled four times, on hearing which all those who are not then engaged in one of the canonical services in church, or occupied with other duties such as haymaking or harvest work which cannot be stopped, hasten to their dying brother, repeating, as they go, the Creed aloud two or three times. If he still lives, they say beside him the Litany and the seven penitential Psalms; and when he expires they commend with various prayers his soul to God. Afterwards they carry the corpse into the choir of the church, where a taper is kept burning at its head. Some of the monks watch constantly beside it, reciting the Office of the Dead, and the whole Psalter, it may be, oftener than once till the burial, which takes place only a few hours after death, unless night intervenes. The priests, monks who are not in orders, and novices, headed by the Abbot carrying his pastoral staff and clad in alb, stole, and maniple—with a cross borne aloft—accompany the remains in solemn procession, with chanting, to the place of interment, where they are buried with the rites of the Church, the grave as well as the corpse being sprinkled with holy water and incensed both before and after the interment. The company then return in procession to the choir, and there conclude the funeral obsequies. Many



*brevia*, or announcements of the death, stating the place, and the name, rank, and office of the deceased are now written by the chantor and given to the porter for distribution to strangers. Some are also sent to neighbouring monasteries, requesting for the deceased the prayers of their inmates—in accordance with Roman Catholic dogmas. A collect is said for him in the Abbey church daily during the next thirty days in the Office of the Dead at Lauds and Vespers, and also in the mass; and at the end of this period—as already stated—he is absolved in the chapter by the Abbot. Moreover, three masses are said for him privately by each of the monks who is in priest's orders; and the Psalter is said once by each cleric of a lower grade. Those who may not yet know the Psalter by heart say the Miserere a hundred and fifty times; and if any are ignorant of that Psalm they say the Lord's Prayer with the like frequency.

As regards deceased brethren of other monasteries of the Order, on the 10th of January annually is held the anniversary of all deceased Abbots and Bishops. On the 15th of September absolution is pronounced in the General Chapter at Cîteaux, and on the same day in every Cistercian monastery—including that of Balmerino—on all monks and servants of the Order who have died during the preceding twelve months; and the Abbot says, 'May they rest in peace'; to which the convent responds, *Amen*. On the same day their *tricenarium*, or period of thirty days begins, during which Collects are said for them daily at mass, and also at Lauds and Vespers; and, in addition, mass is said for the dead every day throughout the year with certain exceptions; and they are also commemorated daily in the chapter. Moreover, three portions of food, as we have seen, are placed daily on the dinner table for those Cistercians who have died; and every monk in priest's orders says twenty masses for them within the year: the rest say the Psalter ten times, or the Miserere or the Lord's Prayer a hundred and fifty times, as





above. On the first day on which the Abbot presides in the chapter after his return from Citeaux, he again pronounces absolution on the same persons. On the 15th of September also the like superstitious ceremonies are performed on behalf of the parents, brothers, sisters, and other blood relations of Cistercian monks who may have died during the preceding year; and when any monk 'begs pity' for his father, mother, brother, or sister who has died—the only relatives for whom he may do so—the deceased is absolved by the Abbot, and every monk who is a priest, says in a private mass a Collect for him; the other brethren say the seven penitential Psalms, or the Miserere, or the Lord's Prayer seven times. The private masses may be sung throughout the year during the time devoted to reading; two witnesses being required, one of whom must be a cleric to assist the priest; and those who sing them, with their assistants, must moderate their voices so as not to disturb others. Masses and other services relating to the dead formed so prominent a feature of monastic ritual, that any account of it would be very imperfect which did not notice them.

Such is a condensed description of the life led by a society of religious recluses at Balmerino for three hundred and thirty years; though the strict observance of their rules was in various particulars modified or relaxed—as we shall see—from time to time, especially towards the close of the period.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The particulars forming the substance of the foregoing sketch have been gathered from the *Liber Usuum Cisterciensis Ordinis*, and *St. Benedict's Rule*. A few details have been added from other sources.



## CHAPTER VI

ABBOTS RALPH, JOHN I., AND ADAM I.

‘Not sedentary all : there are who roam  
To scatter seeds of life on barbarous shores ;  
Or quit with zealous step their knee-worn floors  
To seek the general mart of Christendom ;  
Whence they, like richly-laden merchants, come  
To their beloved cells.’

—WORDSWORTH.

ABBOT RALPH was the successor of Alan. He had been cellarer of the monastery before his elevation to its government in 1236 ; and ruled longer than his predecessor, having lived till the year 1251.<sup>1</sup> In his time a large addition was made to the property of the Abbey, and the Primary Bull of protection for its privileges was obtained from Rome.

Malcolm, Earl of Fife, granted to the convent all the water running from his mill of Rathulith (Rathillet) by the ancient channel in which it was wont to run to the mill of Ballindan in the time of Henry and Richard Renel ; with the privilege of digging turf for the repair of the channel when necessary, but so as to do no damage to any of the Earl’s arable or meadow land. The name of one of the witnesses to the charter, of whom the King is the first, proves that it must have been granted not later than the year 1238.<sup>2</sup> It may be here mentioned that a feu-duty of 11s. 10d. is still paid from ‘Rathillet Meal Mill’ to the proprietor of Balmerino Abbey, but what the payment represents does not appear.

Soon after this period the Abbey acquired the lands of Petgornoc and Drumdol in Strathmiglo parish, to be held in free

<sup>1</sup> *Chron. de Mailros*, pp. 147, 178.

<sup>2</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 37.



charity after the decease of the Countess Marjorie, the King's sister, who had obtained these lands from Malcolm, Earl of Fife, in exchange for those of Strathord and Strathbraan given to her by King William as her dowry. The gift of Petgornoc and Drindol to the monks is in the name of King Alexander II.; but it is probable that in this way he only gave effect to the wishes of the Countess Marjorie herself, just as in the Foundation Charter he had given to the Abbey in his own name, what were really his mother's benefactions. The Countess was the youngest of the three daughters of William the Lion by Queen Ermengarde. She was celebrated for her beauty, and made a deep impression on the heart of Henry III. of England, whom only reasons of state prevented from marrying her. She was afterwards—in 1236—united to Gilbert the Mareschal, the youthful Earl of Pembroke, and died without issue. Though removed to England, she would not be unmindful of the land of her birth, or of the Abbey founded by her mother, and in all probability directed that the above-mentioned lands in Fife, exchanged for her former more distant possessions, should after her decease be added to the grants made by her mother and brother. The names of the witnesses determine the date of the King's charter to have been between the years 1240 and 1249.<sup>1</sup>

This extensive grant included the lands subsequently called Steadmuirland, Friarmyln, Kincraigie, Pitgorno or Pitgorno, Craigfod or Freeland, Drumdriel, and Gaitside. At the last named place the monks afterwards had a chapel built, which was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and intended, doubtless, for the benefit of their tenants or servants. A house and lands were attached to it. In a Rental of the Abbey, of a date subsequent to the Reformation, it is described as 'the chapell of St. Mary the Virgin of [the] den lying beside the Gaitsyd in the barony of Pitgorno.' The 'den' or hollow in which it stood was at the west end of Gaitside, and near the chapel was a well

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<sup>1</sup> *Chortulary*, No. 10.



called the Chapel Well. The matrix of the seal of 'a small religious house (or hospital)' at Gateside—probably no other than St. Mary's chapel—is said to have been in the possession of a gentleman in Kinross in 1844.<sup>1</sup>

Between 1242 and 1254 'John de Scotia, Earl of Hunte-don,' grants to the Abbey a toft in Dundee lying on the west side of, and next to the toft of the monks of Cupar-Angus, which was formerly the property of Thomas de Colvill.<sup>2</sup> About the same time the convent bought from Hervey, the son of Humfrid Willebeter of Forfar, a piece of ground in that town, the *reddendo* being threepence annually, payable at Michael-mas.<sup>3</sup> The reason why the monks *purchased* property in towns, as now in Forfar and formerly in Perth and Crail, was probably that they might have, as was the common practice of Religious houses, a hospice or lodging-place in those towns when they went thither on the business of the convent. Notices of such places at Dundee, Barry, and Anstruther will be found on subsequent pages. Before the year 1246 the Abbey also acquired either by gift or purchase houses in St. Andrews and Roxburgh.<sup>4</sup>

Of the benefactors of the Abbey not the least liberal were the ancient family who derived their surname from Kinneir in Kilmany parish, and flourished there for six centuries, and perhaps for a much longer period if, as is not improbable, they were the representatives of the previous Thaness of Kinneir already noticed. Sibbald informs us that they had a charter from King Alexander II., and that there was a William de Kiner in King William's time. On the last day of August 1244, Alexander II., being again at the Abbey, confirms by charter to the monks a grant of land which had been previously made to them by Symon of Kynner. The charter by which Symon confers this land on the convent describes it as being situated in the 'territory' of Catholach (Kedlock in Logie parish), and called

<sup>1</sup> Chalmers' *History of Dunfermline*, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 36.

<sup>3</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 58.





Reginald's land, which included the hill known by the name of Torcatholach. His charter also bestows on the monks the right of keeping two hundred sheep on the common pasture there; and if this pasture should be insufficient for so many, he and his heirs will make good the deficiency from his demesne land in Catholach. The King, however, reserves the service due to himself from these lands. Among the witnesses to the two charters are Hugo, chaplain of Kilmany; Lawrence of Abernethi; John de Haya, Sheriff of Fife; and Henry of Dundemore (Dunmore, now corrupted into Denmuir).<sup>1</sup>

Other and more valuable lands given by this family to the Abbey shall be afterwards described. Their liberality was not confined to the monks of Balmerino. Simon, son of Simon of Kynner, bestowed on the Priory of St. Andrews five oxgates and four acres more of land—69 acres in all—in the territory of Kathlac (Kedlock)—one of the boundaries of which was 'the acre of the Brethren of St. Lazarus'—with pasture, both in his demesne land and in the common pasture of that township, for four horses, eight oxen, four cows, and eighty ewes. It was probably this land which in 1623 was still called Prior-Cathlok, the name being derived from its having belonged, like the land of Priorwell in Balmerino parish, to the Prior and canons of St. Andrews.<sup>2</sup> Simon, son of Michael—perhaps of the same family—had given, in the reign of King William, to the 'Hospital of Poor Strangers' at St. Andrews a ploughgate of land in Chathelach, with common pasture for 'twenty-four animals and eighty bidents' (or sheep). Alan, his son, confirmed the gift, and Prior Walter afterwards feued the land to him.<sup>3</sup>

The Abbey being now fully established and liberally endowed, it became necessary to obtain Papal protection for its possessions and privileges, which was then considered indispensable to every religious enterprise. This was therefore

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, Nos. 39, 40.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. Pr. St. Andr.*, p. 292.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 212, 325.



applied for to Pope Innocent IV.—Abbot Ralph in all probability undertaking a journey to Rome for the purpose—and obtained in a Bull of which the date is not given; but as Innocent IV. filled the Papal chair from 1242 to 1254, and as another Bull of the year 1246 seems to have been granted to the Abbey at a later period than this one, its date is apparently to be fixed between 1242 and 1246, most probably in the former of these years, or very soon after it. On account of the importance of this, the ‘Original’ or Primary Bull of Protection—illustrating as it does the privileges of the monastery as a Cistercian house—it will be proper, notwithstanding its great length, to give here a translation of it without abridgment.

## Primary Bull of Papal Protection

INNOCENT, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his beloved sons the Abbot and brethren, both present and future, of the monastery of Balmurynach professing a regular life. It is proper that the apostolic protection be given to those who choose a religious life, lest perchance some act of indiscretion should either recall them from their purpose, or—which Heaven forbid—impair the strength of their sacred vows. Wherefore, beloved sons in the Lord, we graciously assent to your just demands, and take under St. Peter’s protection and our own, and fortify by the favour of the present writ the monastery of the holy mother of God and Virgin Mary of Balmurynach, in the diocese of St. Andrews, in which you are given up to the service of God. In the first place, we appoint that the monastic Order which is selected to be established in that monastery according to God and the Rule of St. Benedict, and the institution of the Cistercian brethren recognised by us after a General Council, be there inviolably observed in all time coming. Further, let whatever property, whatever goods the said monastery may at present justly and canonically possess, or can in future acquire by the concession of Pontiffs, the bounty of Kings, or the offering of faithful Princes, or in other just methods by the favour of God, remain sure and unimpaired to you and your successors. Of which things we have reckoned the



following worthy of express mention:—The Place itself in which the said monastery is situated, with all its pertinents of Cultran, Balmurynach in Fiff, Ballindan, Ballindard, Corby, and Fetmureth in Angus, Thorcatloch in Fiff, Petgornoch, and Drundole—these lands with the pertinents thereof; houses which you have in the towns of Karal (Crail), St. Andrews, Forfar, Dundee, Perth, and Rokisburg, with their pertinents; and the revenues which you have from the church of [Fetmureth in] Angus; with meadows, vineyards,<sup>1</sup> lands, woods, and rights of pasture; thickets and open grounds, waters, mills, roads, and by-paths; and all their other liberties and immunities. Let no one presume to demand or extort from you tithes of your lands reclaimed by yourselves (*novalia*) which you cultivate with your own hands or at your own charges, from which no one has hitherto received tithes; or from your gardens, under-wood, and fishings; or from animals' food. It shall be lawful also for you to receive to conversion clerical and lay persons, free and unfettered, fleeing from the world, and to retain them without any contradiction. Moreover, we forbid any of your brethren, after profession made in your monastery, to depart thence without the permission of his Abbot. But let no one dare to detain a person departing, without the security of your common letters. If any shall presume so to detain him, it shall be lawful for us to publish a regular sentence against such monks or converts. We strictly forbid either lands or any other gift conferred on your church to be given to any one in his individual capacity, or to be alienated in any other way without the consent of the whole chapter, or of the major or wiser part of it. But if any donations or alienations have been made otherwise than as now stated, we pronounce them void. We further forbid any monk or convert bound under the profession of your house to be surety for any one without the consent and license of the Abbot and the majority of your chapter; or to receive money in loan from any one, beyond a sum fixed by the foresight of your chapter, unless for the manifest advantage of your house; which if perchance he may have presumed to do, the convent shall in no degree be held responsible for it. Moreover,

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<sup>1</sup> The mention of vineyards here is no doubt a mere customary form; but the vine was anciently cultivated in the open air in some parts both of England and Ireland. Vineyards were attached to many monasteries. Documents in the Record Office particularize the names and wages of the vine-dressers, and methods of wine-making.—(See C. R. Smith's *Collectanea Antiqua*, Part II. vol. vi.)



it shall be lawful for you to make use of the testimony of your brethren in your own causes, whether involving a civil or criminal matter, lest through defect of witnesses your right in anything should be lost. We further forbid by Apostolic authority any Bishop or other person to compel you to go to Synods or courts of law, or submit to a secular tribunal in respect of your substance or possessions; nor may any one presume to come to your houses for the purpose of conferring orders,<sup>1</sup> dealing with causes, or calling public courts; or impede the regular election of your Abbot; or in the least degree interfere with the institution or removal of him who for the time may have been in office in violation of the rules of the Cistercian Order. But if the Bishop in whose diocese your house is built, when requested with becoming humility and devotion to pronounce his benediction on the Abbot submitted to him, and to bestow upon you the other things which pertain to the episcopal office, shall refuse, it shall be lawful for the said Abbot, provided, however, he has made his own novices, to give them his benediction, and exercise the other functions of his office; and lawful for you to receive from another Bishop all those things which were unjustly denied to you by your own. Moreover, in receiving those professions which are made by Abbots who have been or are to be blessed, let Bishops be content with that form of expression which is known to have been in use since the foundation of the Order; so that Abbots themselves, in making their professions to the Bishop, shall be bound to preserve the privileges, and to make no profession contrary to the statutes of the Order. Let no one dare to extort anything from you on pretence of custom, or in any other way, for consecration of altars or churches, or for holy oil, or for any ecclesiastical sacrament; but let the Bishop of the diocese supply all those things free of charge. Otherwise it shall be lawful for you to apply to whatever Catholic Bishop, being in favour and communion with the Apostolic see, you may prefer, who under protection of our authority may supply to you what is demanded of him. But if the see of the Bishop of the diocese happens to be vacant, you may in the meantime receive freely and without contradiction all the sacraments from

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<sup>1</sup> That is, to come uninvited. The Bishop, *when asked*, consecrated the newly elected Abbot, ordained monks, &c.; but he had no control or jurisdiction over the inmates of the monastery or their servants even when they were accused of crimes, or over their dependencies.





the neighbouring Bishops, provided, however, that no injury shall thence afterwards result to your own Bishop. But since you have sometimes not the resource of your own Bishop, if any Bishop, having, as we have said, favour and communion with the see of Rome, and of whom you have full knowledge, should happen to pass by you, you shall have power to receive from him, as by the authority of the Apostolic see, benedictions of vessels and robes, consecrations of altars, and ordinations of monks. Moreover, if Bishops or other rulers of churches shall publish a sentence of suspension, excommunication, or interdict against the monastery, or persons placed therein, or even against your hired servants, on the alleged plea, as already said, that you have not paid your tithes, or on account of any of those things which have been conceded to you by Apostolic kindness; or shall pronounce a similar sentence against your benefactors because, out of charity, they have conferred some benefits or indulgences upon you, or helped you in your work on those days on which you were labouring while others were keeping holiday, we have decreed that such sentence, pronounced in opposition to the indulgences granted to you by the Apostolic see, shall be void. Nor shall those letters have any force which may happen to have been obtained by concealment of the name of the Cistercian Order, and in opposition to Apostolic privileges conferred. Moreover, when there shall be a general interdict laid on the country, it shall nevertheless be lawful for you, having excluded excommunicated and interdicted persons, to celebrate divine service in your monastery.<sup>1</sup> We, wishing, with paternal

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<sup>1</sup> When the Pope placed a country or province under an interdict, the privilege of performing divine service in a low voice, with closed doors, and without ringing of bells, was generally granted to the Religious Orders (see *Reg. Pr. S. Andr.*, p. 60; and Stuart's *Rec. Kinloss*, p. 106); but all the *parish churches* were shut, though sermons could be preached in the churchyard; no marriage could take place except in the churchyard; and to the dead were refused the rites of sepulture.

‘Bells are dumb;  
Ditches are graves—funeral rites denied;  
And in the churchyard he must take his bride  
Who dares be wedded!’

In 1217-18 this happened in Scotland, when all the churches were closed for a whole year, and the clergy ceased to execute their functions, except the Cistercian monks, who continued to perform divine service for some time, but they also were at length suspended.



solicitude for the future, to provide also for your peace and tranquillity, prohibit by Apostolic authority, within the inclosures of your Places or Granges, all rapine or theft, fire-raising, bloodshed, rash seizure or slaying of men, or violence. Moreover, we confirm by Apostolic authority, and fortify by the present writ, all liberties and immunities granted to your Order by our predecessors the Roman Pontiffs; also liberties and exemptions from secular exactions granted to you by Kings and Princes, or for good reasons by others of the faithful. We therefore decree that it shall not be lawful for any one rashly to disturb the said monastery, or to take away its possessions, or to retain them when taken away; to diminish them, or to give annoyance to it by any vexations acts; but that all things which have been granted for any future purpose whatsoever shall be preserved entire for the government and maintenance of its inmates, reserving the authority of the Apostolic see. If, therefore, in the future any ecclesiastical or secular person, knowing this writ of our constitution, shall attempt rashly to contravene it, let him, after having been twice or thrice admonished—unless he shall atone for his crime by a suitable satisfaction—be deprived of the dignity of his power and honour; and let him know that he stands charged by divine justice with the iniquity so committed; and let him be disjoined from the most sacred body and blood of our God and Redeemer the Lord Jesus Christ; and let him lie under His severe vengeance at the last Judgment. But on all who shall preserve for the said Place its rights let the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ rest, so that they may both reap here the fruit of their good conduct, and receive from the righteous Judge the rewards of eternal peace. AMEN.<sup>1</sup>

Very soon after the monks had obtained this comprehensive grant of privileges from Innocent IV., they applied, for some reason which does not appear, to the same Pope for another Bull of a similar kind. This was granted at Lyons on the 30th March 1246. It conferred, in briefer terms, Apostolic and Papal protection on their persons and monastery, and confirmed to them their tithes, lands, possessions, rents, granges, houses, meadows and pastures, and all other goods,

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 58.



subject to the regulations of a General Council respecting their tithes. This Bull, like several subsequent ones granted to the Abbey, declared that any one who should attempt rashly to infringe it should know that he would thereby incur 'the anger of Almighty God and of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul.'<sup>1</sup>

On the death of Abbot Ralph in the year 1251, he was succeeded by ABBOT JOHN, who had formerly been Prior of the monastery in the Isle of May, and afterwards became a monk of Balmerino. As Prior of May, he gave, in the year 1248, sentence in a cause between the convents of Kilwinning and Dryburgh.<sup>2</sup> His reign at Balmerino was brief, as he resigned his office, for some unknown cause, in the following year.<sup>3</sup>

ABBOT ADAM was John's successor. Before his elevation he had been porter of Melrose Abbey, and was now, apparently, well advanced in years.<sup>4</sup>

It was doubtless Abbot Adam who, careful of the interests of his new charge, caused to be recorded in the Abbey Chartulary no fewer than four Papal Bulls which had been granted at Perugia on the 23rd of August 1253 by Innocent IV., confirming the privileges of all monasteries of the Cistercian Order.

The first of these Bulls sets forth that though Cistercian monks had been exempted by the Popes from attendance at synods and public courts, and from sentences of excommunication, suspension, or interdict pronounced against them or their monasteries by Bishops or other persons; and though their deviations from duty were suitably punished both by their own General Chapters and the chapters held daily in each of their monasteries, and they were themselves ready to punish disobedience by Abbots to the statutes of the Order; neverthe-

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 61.

<sup>2</sup> *Stuart's Records of the Isle of May*, p. lxii.

<sup>3</sup> *Chron. de Mailros*, pp. 178, 179.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 179, 185.



less, many prelates and others summoned them to appear before various tribunals for their offences, just as if they had been secular clergy. Wherefore the Pope strictly prohibits all such violations of the privileges of their Order, and declares sentences pronounced against the monks to be null and void.<sup>1</sup>

The second Bull is in its tenor very similar to the first. It is addressed to Bishops, Abbots, and other rulers of churches in consequence of a complaint made to the Pope by the Cistercian Abbots and convents, bearing that notwithstanding their privileges as above stated, prelates who were envious of their peace and liberties had nevertheless promulgated sentences against them, and compelled them to undergo labour and expense in attending courts. The Pope therefore requests and exhorts all such rulers to respect and observe the immunities of the Cistercians, and utterly refrain from molesting them.<sup>2</sup> These two documents illustrate the feelings of jealousy and rivalry which, as is well known, the secular and the regular clergy of the Church of Rome have frequently entertained towards each other.

In the third Bull the Pope waxes eloquent on the piety of the Cistercian Order, declaring it to be a treasury of virtues, pleasing in the sight of the Eternal King, and gracious in the eyes of men, gentle and mild as a dove, and specially chosen of God; altogether fair; casting from it every wrinkle of irregularity and every stain of deformity; its Superiors exercising such watchfulness that no thorns of vice can grow in it, and that it abounds, with unfading fertility, in the flowers of honour and the fruits of honesty; being a mirror of good life and a pattern of healthy conversation. And as in the past the Order never needed visitation or correction by others than their own Abbots, or by monks deputed by them; so the Pope now accords to them, for the future also, exemp-

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<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 62.





tion from extraneous visitation or correction, reserving the authority of the Holy See.<sup>1</sup> This curious document proves either that the Cistercian monks were as yet guiltless of the irregularities which ultimately characterised all the monastic Orders, or that the Pope was anxious, by magnifying their virtues, to justify to the world the special privileges which had been bestowed on them, and which were so amply repaid by their unbounded devotion to the see of Rome.

In the last of these Bulls the Pope, in answer to a petition from all the Cistercian Abbots and convents, authorizes the continuance of the practice which had existed from the first institution of the Order, according to which Cistercian monks received ordination from Bishops without being subjected to any examination, with the exception of those who had been guilty of notorious crime or immorality.<sup>2</sup>

At some period between the years 1254 and 1264 Roger de Quinci, Earl of Winchester and Great Constable of Scotland, grants to the Abbey a portion of his peatary in his moss of Swan Mire near Leuchars. The boundary of the portion granted is defined as 'beginning at the place where the stream which issues from Aldaniswell (or Aldamswell) falls into Swanismire, and proceeding northwards across it to the marches of Auirnachtan (Ardnachtan or Naughton) separating between us and Symon de Seelforde, our free tenant (that is, freeholder, or sub-vassal of the Crown), and then by the marches of Auirnachtan westwards to the place where the Abbot of Balmerynacht by our precept caused stakes to be fixed in presence of Peter Basset, then Constable of Lokris (Leuchars), Roger Abboth our steward, William Stransure and Alan Surale, and by the same fixed stakes southwards to the dry land under the road, and thence eastwards to the place where the stream issuing from Aldam's Wel falls into the foresaid marsh.' The grant includes free

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 65.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 69.



ish and entry through the donor's lands and those of his men for the carriage of the peats. Amongst the witnesses to the charter are Gamlin, Bishop of St. Andrews—whose name fixes the initial date as above stated—Sir Peter de Maule and other two knights, the Constable of Leuchars, and the donor's steward already mentioned.<sup>1</sup> That monks should be kept warm and comfortable seems to have been a ruling idea in the generous soul of this Earl, for we find him granting to Lindores Abbey the right to as many peats for the convent's own use as they chose to take from his peatary of Menegre, and also to the very large quantity of two hundred cart-loads of heather or brushwood (*brucere*) annually from his moor of Kinloch in Collessie parish.<sup>2</sup>

This Roger de Quinci was the grandson of Robert de Quinci, a Northamptonshire baron, who was distantly connected with the royal family of Scotland and acquired the lordship of Leuchars by marrying Orabilis, the daughter of Ness the son of William, its proprietor—one of the foreign settlers in Fife. Orabilis had been previously married to Gilchrist, Earl of Mar, whose daughter was the mother of Thomas de Lundin, the King's Doorward. Robert de Quinci died in the year 1190, and was succeeded by his son Seyer de Quinci, who was created Earl of Winchester or Winton in England, and having taken a prominent part in procuring the Magna Charta from King John at Runnymede, was one of twenty-five barons that were appointed to use forcible means, if necessary, for preventing its violation by the sovereign. Seyer died in Palestine about the year 1219. His son, Earl Roger, married the eldest daughter of Alan, Lord of Galloway, and became, in her right, Great Constable of

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 38, which contains only a few lines of the beginning of this charter, the remainder being wanting. The complete charter has been printed from the Southesk Charters in Fraser's *History of the Carnegies, Earls of Southesk*, pp. 476-77, that family having long been proprietors of the Castle and of a portion of the lands of Leuchars.

<sup>2</sup> *Chartulary of Lindores*, App. No. III.



Scotland. Dying in 1264 without a male heir, his estates were divided among his three daughters; of whom the eldest married the Earl of Derby; the second, Alexander Cumyn, Earl of Buchan; and the third, Alan de la Zouche. The Earl of Buchan, in the right of his wife, obtained the office of Constable of Scotland and the lordship of Leuchars. His son, having espoused the cause of Baliol in the contest for the crown, was defeated by Robert Bruce and deprived of his estates, as well as of the office of Constable. The lordship of Leuchars thus forfeited was afterwards divided among three families named Ramsay, Wemyss, and Monypenny. Leuchars-Ramsay included the Castle of Leuchars, which stood on a slight eminence north of the present village, surrounded by a moat, and was repeatedly dismantled and rebuilt during the English invasions in the fourteenth century. It was finally demolished about the beginning of the present century—when it is said to have been similar in the style of its architecture to Earlshall, but much larger—and its materials were used for the erection of farm offices on the estate. The perpetrator of this act of vandalism was its proprietor, the Hon. Robert Lindsay of Balcarres. The churches of Leuchars and Lathrisk—that is, their revenues and patronage—were given to St. Andrews Priory by the above-mentioned Ness, son of William.<sup>1</sup> But it was in all probability either Robert or Seyer de Quinci who built the exceedingly interesting church of Leuchars, of which the chancel and semicircular apse still remain, and have often been described. With its enriched ornamentation it forms a beautiful specimen of the Romanesque or Norman style in its later development, though it has in modern times been disfigured by the erection of a belfry over the apse, and otherwise.

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<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Pr. St. Andr.*, pp. 287, 254.



## CHAPTER VII

ABBOTS ADAM II., WILLIAM DE PERISBY,  
THOMAS, AND WILLIAM II.

‘Happy the dwellers in this holy house :  
For surely never worldly thoughts intrude  
On this retreat, this sacred solitude,  
Where Quiet with Religion makes her home.’

—SOUTHEY.

‘*Prince Henry.*                Your monks are learned  
And holy men, I trust.  
    *Abbot.*                    There are among them  
Learned and holy men. Yet in this age  
    . . . . . even here, at times,  
Within these walls, where all should be at peace,  
I have my trials.’

—LONGFELLOW.

IN the year 1260 Abbot Adam resigned his office, ‘which by reason of infirmity he was unable to hold longer.’ His successor was another ADAM, who previous to his elevation had been a monk of the house.<sup>1</sup>

In thus arriving at the commencement of a new reign in the monastery we may feel regret that its annals, so far as they are now known, are somewhat barren of notable events. Of the three hundred and thirty years of its existence few records have come down to us, save the account which its Chartulary contains of its property and privileges. Even the list of its successive Abbots, compiled from such notices of them as are found in this and other ancient documents, is possibly imperfect; and, with two or three exceptions, they do not appear as conspicuous figures on the page of history.

<sup>1</sup> *Chron. de Mailros*, p. 185.





Yet during those centuries many incidents must have taken place in the Abbey, or connected with it, well worthy of being recorded. It would be interesting to ascertain the changes which may have occurred in its economy and discipline, its architectural history, the number of its inmates at different periods, and their relations to each other and to the outer world. But though such details are wanting, we may yet form some idea of life in the Abbey during those long ages. While Scotland was engaged in the protracted struggle for independence which was forced upon it by the ambition of English Princes; and while the unfortunate Stewarts filled the throne, and rebellious barons were involving the country in perpetual discord and bloodshed; it is pleasing to picture the inmates of this retired monastery, in which they had found a refuge from the evils of the time, spending their tranquil lives in the performance of their daily and nightly services in the Abbey church, and in exercises of fasting and devotion; in the study of sacred music, of which the Cistercians were zealous promoters; the transcription of ancient books; the repair or enlargement of the conventual buildings, and Art studies connected therewith; the cultivation of their fields, garden, and fruit trees; such occupations being varied in the case of the lay brothers, and probably also in that of the monks themselves—at least in the later days of less rigorous discipline—by hunting and hawking in the woods, or the capture of salmon and sparlings in the Tay. Though the cloister, as we shall find, was not always the abode of peace and propriety of conduct, yet in general its inmates had little more to disturb them than perhaps an occasional dispute with the Bishop of the diocese or others about their privileges as Cistercians, or with some lay proprietor or tenant concerning the marches of their lands, or the payment of their rents or tithes. Now a new Abbot would have to be elected, or a new candidate for admission into the fraternity would present himself at the convent gate; and again an aged brother would enter



into his rest, and a new-made grave would admonish the survivors of their own mortality. Let us indulge the hope that narrow and defective as was the monastic idea of a religious life, not a few of the brethren yet found within the cloister a refuge from the snares and temptations of the world, and were successful in training their souls in that kind of piety for the cultivation of which they had assumed the monkish garb.

But the life of the cloister was not all retirement and routine. The more distant possessions of the convent would demand attention. Visits also would be made and received. The Bishop, when required, would come from St. Andrews to install a new Abbot, or to admit the monks to holy orders; or their hospitality might be claimed by the Bishop's officials whom, with their horses, they were sometimes obliged to lodge and entertain when these made their yearly tour through the parish churches.<sup>1</sup> The Abbot of Melrose would come on his annual visitation to this its daughter monastery. Great barons, or even the Sovereign himself would occasionally be received as guests of the Abbot, having been first conducted in procession into the church or chapter-house. At times the Abbot would set out on a special journey to Rome in order to procure some coveted privilege from the Pope, or the redress of some grievance to which the house had been subjected; and every fourth year he would have to cross over to France to attend the General Chapter of the Order and consult for the common welfare. Gladly would his return to the monastery be welcomed; and we cannot doubt that at such reunions there would be a suspension of the general practice of silence, and that his foreign news and adventures would be made known to the brethren and become topics of conversation. His visits to the Court in order to take his place among bishops and abbots, barons and burgesses, in the deliberations

<sup>1</sup> Forbes on *Church Lands and Tithes*, p. 181.



of the Scottish Estates would keep the monks informed in regard to the public events of the day; while his annual visits to the parent monastery of Melrose, and his presence at the Councils of the diocese of St. Andrews, and also at the Provincial Councils of the whole Scottish Church, which sat three consecutive days annually, and were attended by Bishops and heads of Religious houses, would keep them acquainted with the course of ecclesiastical affairs. At times, too, would the brethren—the prohibition of speech with strangers being on certain occasions relaxed—listen with rapt attention to the stories brought from the outer world by some far-travelled pilgrim to whom they had given shelter and hospitality for the night. We must not suppose that the existing records furnish any adequate measure of the variety of the events which took place, affecting the monastery and its inmates. There would be no want of occasions of mild excitement in their somewhat monotonous life. As a great landholder, also, the convent would be interested in, and be an object of interest to, the whole of the neighbouring district; while the rustics, as they passed its stately pile of buildings, with the beautiful and spacious Gothic church in the foreground, and probably surrounded in course of time by venerable trees, would be reminded of another world, for which the good cenobites had, whether rightly or wrongly, withdrawn themselves from the trials and duties of the present.

To proceed with our history. At some time not later than the year 1260 Symon of Kynner grants to the monks half of his land of Kynner—that now called Wester Kinneir—the boundaries of which, as being of considerable local interest, we give in full:—‘Beginning on the west side of Kynner, namely, at the Glac, and running as far as to the Rock; and thence descending to the Well; and from the Well to the Mothric (Motray) by the ancient marches, and so on to Kethyn; thence ascending to the site of the Mill, including its privilege of water for driving the mill; and thence ascending as far as to the



Cross (set up doubtless as a landmark); and from the Cross by Kethyn to the great Stone; and from the Stone to the Hill; and from the Hill to the Glac.' Symon grants also 'the common pasture pertaining to the said land, excepting six acres belonging to the Hospital (of St. John the Baptist of Jerusalem), and two acres of meadow belonging to the laird thereof for the time being, on the west side.' He afterwards repeats these grants with consent of his wife Amia, whom he had probably married in the interval; and adds to them 'the nearest adjacent land on the east side of Kynner, which is thus bounded:—Ascending from the site of the Mill through the dry ground, and going round Inchelyn and Wetslac; and thence ascending to the well of Langside; and ascending thence to the White Rock on the east side of Cragnagren; and proceeding thence by the right boundaries as far as to the well of Munbuche;<sup>1</sup> and from Munbuche to the Glac; and thence descending to Wester Kethyn by the right marches as far as the White Cross; and thence descending along the stream by the site of the old Mill to the marsh.' Symon and his wife make oath, while touching the *sacrosancta*, that they give this donation of their own free will; and they subject themselves and their heirs to excommunication and other penalties if they shall ever contravene the gift. Among the witnesses to these charters are several of the neighbouring clergy—Sir William,<sup>2</sup> parson of

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<sup>1</sup> This Gaelic word occurs also in the Arbroath Chartulary in the forms of *Moynbuche* and *Monboy*, and its meaning is there correctly given (as appears from Joyce's *Irish Names of Places*, 2nd series, pp. 272, 370) as *Yellowpool*.—(*Reg. Vetus Aberbr.*, p. 228; and *Pars Altera*, p. 104.)

<sup>2</sup> The title *Sir* (in Latin, *Dominus*) appears to have been at this time given to priests indiscriminately, who were hence called the Pope's Knights:—

'The poor Preist thynkis he gettis no rycht  
Be he nocht stylit lyke ane knyght,  
And callit Schir, affoir his name,  
As Schir Thomas, and Schir Wilyame.'

(Sir David Lindsay's '*Experience and Ane Courteour*.' Laing's ed. of *Knox's Works*, i., 555–56.) After the establishment of Universities and near the time of





Fliske; Sir Adam, chaplain of Kilmanyn; Sir Robert, designed of Collessyn, chaplain of Fliske; Sir William, chaplain of Lokeris.<sup>1</sup> King Alexander confirms these grants at Selkirk on the 21st of September, in the twelfth year of his reign, reserving his own servitude. As Kinneir is not mentioned among the possessions of the Abbey specified in the Primary Bull (1242-46), it must have been Alexander III. who gave this charter of confirmation in 1260, and not Alexander II. in the year 1226—as is assumed in the Index to the Chartulary—when the monks had not yet come to Balmerino.

In the year 1261 Pope Urban IV. granted to the whole Cistercian Order exemption from secular taxes imposed by kings and others—a privilege which had been already conferred on Balmerino Abbey by King Alexander II. in the Foundation Charter in respect of the lands therein mentioned.<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding this exemption the Cistercians in course of time paid taxes, but under protest. In 1263 the same Pope granted to them the right to tithes from *novalia*, or newly reclaimed lands, in those parishes in which they drew the old tithes.<sup>3</sup>

In the year 1268 Henry de Hastings grants to the Abbey his share of a burgage property in Dundee, lying between the burgage ground of Henry de Donny and that of Roger del Wend (Roger of the Wynd?).<sup>4</sup>

Abbot Adam II. died in 1270, and in his place was chosen WILLIAM DE PERISBY. He was probably of the same family as Hugo de Perisby, Sheriff of Roxburgh, who towards the end

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the Reformation the title *Dominus* was, in the opinion of Dr. David Laing, restricted to those who had taken their Bachelor's degree, while clergy of all ranks who had taken the degree of Master of Arts were styled Master (*Magister*). Dr. Laing is, however, in error in stating that the title *Dominus* was never applied to laymen. Further on we shall meet with instances of its being so applied.

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, Nos. 12 to 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 68.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 63.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 32.



of the thirteenth century married a daughter of Merleswein, laird of Ardross in Fife.<sup>1</sup>

At the request of this Abbot and the convent, Pope Gregory X. granted to them in the year 1271 a new Bull of protection for their persons, monastery, and privileges.<sup>2</sup>

The Council of Lyons having in the year 1274 imposed a tax of one-tenth of all Church benefices during the six following years towards an expedition for the relief of the Holy Land, the Pope sent Boiamund de Vicci in 1275 to collect this subsidy in Scotland. The Scottish clergy petitioned, but without effect, that it should be levied, as ecclesiastical taxes had hitherto been levied, according to the old conventional valuation called the *Taxatio Antiqua*. Boiamund assessed the clergy according to the *Verus Valor*, or actual yearly worth of their benefices as ascertained by their oaths; and the Valuation Roll then drawn up served for the apportionment of Church taxes till the Reformation. It evidently gives the valuation in round sums according to a roughly graduated scale. The Abbey of Balmerino was valued at £533, 6s. 8d. For the purpose of comparison it may be mentioned that, of other Cistercian monasteries, Sweet-Heart or New Abbey, Culross, Glenluce and Deer were each valued at—omitting shillings and pence—£666; Kinloss at £866, Dundrennan at £1000, Newbottle at £1333, Cupar-Angus at £1666, and Melrose at £2400. Of monasteries of other Orders, the valuation of Lindores and Scone was £1666 each, of the Priory of St. Andrews and of Dunfermline Abbey £3333 each, of Arbroath Abbey £4000. The valuation of Balmerino compared more favourably with that of several bishoprics; Dunblane, Galloway, Brechin, Caithness, and Orkney being each valued at £666, Argyle at £293.

A 'Valuation of Scottish prelaties in the Camera at Rome'

<sup>1</sup> *Scotichron.*, ed. Goodall, ii. 113; Wood's *Fast Newk of Fife*, 2nd ed., 19, 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 66.



(A.D. 1492–1550), shows that a great alteration in the relative values had taken place by that time. The list of benefices is, however, incomplete. The valuation of Balmerino Abbey was 200 ducats, of Culross 100, of Glenluce 66, of Deer 100, of Kinloss 300, of Dundrennan 50, of Newbottle 100, of Cupar-Angus 100, of Melrose 800, of Arbroath 600, of Dunfermline and Scone 250 each, of Lindores 333.<sup>1</sup>

Of parish churches in the North-East of Fife Boiamund's valuation of the vicarage of Leuchars was £66, of that of Forgan £33, of that of Kilmany £30, of the rectory of Flisk £100. Creich and Logie are not given.<sup>2</sup> It should be remembered that the purchasing power of money at that period was much greater than at present.

We have no certain information as to the date of Abbot William de Perisby's death; but in all probability he was that Abbot of Balmerino who was drowned in a voyage from Norway. The event is thus related in the *Scotichronicon*:— 'In the year 1281 Margaret, daughter of King Alexander III., was espoused to Hanigow, or Heric, King of Norway; and leaving Scotland on the 12th of August she crossed the sea with a noble train, accompanied by Walter Bullok Earl of Menteith, and his Countess, along with the Abbot of Balmurinach and Bernard de Montealto (Mowat), and many other knights and nobles; and entered Norway on the vigil of the Assumption of our Lady; and, having been honourably received by the King, was crowned by the Archbishop of that kingdom, against the wishes of the King's mother. After the nuptials were solemnly celebrated the said Abbot and Bernard, and many more, in returning were drowned. But Earl Walter and his wife, with their whole family, returned prosperously from Norway to Scotland.' The *Book of Pluscarden* states that these persons returned in another ship. Father Hay, in his *Scotia Sacra*, quoting apparently from the *Book of Cupar* (Angus), supplies

<sup>1</sup> Robertson's *Concilia Scotie*, i., lxx–lxxi, ccciv–cccevi.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



some additional details of this disaster. He states that the ships were shattered to pieces on the rocks, and that our Abbot was swallowed up by the waters after he had been for some time clinging to a broken mast. According to Sir James Balfour, thirty persons were drowned besides the Abbot and Sir Bernard de Montealto.<sup>1</sup>

This sad event is commonly believed to have been the occasion of 'the grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,' as Coleridge calls it; 'the most ancient ballad of which we are in possession,' in the judgment of Finlay and others. The opinion that this famous relic of antiquity refers to the shipwreck just mentioned, since its adoption by Motherwell, has been generally acquiesced in to the exclusion of other theories. The authorship of the ballad and the precise date of its composition are, however, unknown. The opinion of Robert Chambers that it was written by Lady Wardlaw, the author of *Hardiknute*, another celebrated ballad, in the early part of last century, has met with little favour.<sup>2</sup> No apology will be required by the reader for the insertion here of the ballad referred to, which in all probability was occasioned by the death of Abbot William de Perisby and his companions, though it may have been written in a subsequent age. There are several versions of it, differing considerably from each other. The text here given is that adopted by Professor Aytoun.

#### BALLAD OF SIR PATRICK SPENS

The king sits in Dunfermline town,  
Drinking the blude-red wine;  
'O whaur shall I get a skeely skipper  
To sail this ship of mine?'

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<sup>1</sup> *Scotichron.*, ed. Goodall, ii. 124; *Liber Pluscardensis*, lib. vii. cap. xxx.; Balfour's *Annals*, i. 75.

<sup>2</sup> See Motherwell's *Minstrelsy*; Robert Chambers's *Romantic Scottish Ballads*; Aytoun's *Ballads of Scotland*; Norval Clyne's *Romantic Scottish Ballads and the Lady Wardlaw Heresy*; Finlay's *Scottish Historical and Romantic Ballads*.





Then up and spake an eldern knight,  
 Sat at the King's right knee ;  
 ' Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor  
 That ever sailed the sea.'

The King has written a braid letter,  
 And seal'd it with his hand,  
 And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,  
 Was walking on the strand.

' To Noroway, to Noroway,  
 To Noroway o'er the faem ;  
 The King's daughter to Noroway,  
 It's thou maun tak' her hame.'

The first line that Sir Patrick read,  
 A loud laugh laughed he,  
 The next line that Sir Patrick read,  
 The tear came to his e'e.

' O wha is this has done this deed,  
 This ill deed done to me,  
 To send us out at this time o' the year  
 To sail upon the sea?'

They hoisted their sails on a Monday morn  
 Wi' a' the haste they may ;  
 And they hae landed in Noroway  
 Upon the Wodensday.

They hadna been a week, a week,  
 In Noroway but twae,  
 When that the lords o' Noroway  
 Began aloud to say—

' Ye Scotismen spend a' our King's gowd,  
 And a' our Queenis fee.'  
 ' Ye lie, ye lie, ye liars loud,  
 Sae loud's I hear ye lie !

' For I brought as much o' the white monie  
 As gane<sup>1</sup> my men and me,  
 And a half-fou<sup>2</sup> o' the gude red gold,  
 Out owre the sea with me.

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<sup>1</sup> As will suffice for.

<sup>2</sup> The eighth part of a peck.



‘ Be’t wind or weet, be’t snaw or sleet,  
 Our ship shall sail the morn.’  
 ‘ Now ever alack, my master dear,  
 I fear a deadly storm.

‘ I saw the new moon late yestreen  
 Wi’ the auld moon in her arm ;  
 And I fear, I fear, my master dear,  
 That we shall come to harm !’

They hadna sail’d a league, a league,  
 A league but barely three,  
 When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud,  
 And gurly grew the sea.

The ropes they brak, and the top-masts lap,  
 It was sic a deadly storm ;  
 And the waves came o’er the broken ship  
 Till a’ her sides were torn.

‘ O whaur will I get a gude sailor  
 Will tak’ the helm in hand,  
 Until I win to the tall top-mast,  
 And see if I spy the land ?’

‘ It’s here am I, a sailor gude,  
 Will tak’ the helm in hand  
 Till ye win to the tall top-mast,  
 But I fear ye’ll ne’er spy land.’

He hadna gane a step, a step,  
 A step but barely ane,  
 When a bolt flew out of the gude ship’s side,  
 And the salt sea it cam’ in.

‘ Gae, fetch a web of the silken claith,  
 Another o’ the twine,  
 And wap them into the gude ship’s side,  
 And let na the sea come in.’

They fetched a web o’ the silken claith,  
 Another o’ the twine,  
 And they wapp’d them into the gude ship’s side,  
 But aye the sea came in.



O laith, laith were our gude Scots lords  
 To weet their leathern shoon,  
 But lang e'er a' the play was o'er  
 They wat their heads abune.

O lang, lang may the ladies sit  
 Wi' their fans into their hand,  
 Or e'er they see Sir Patrick Spens  
 Come sailing to the land.

O lang, lang may their ladies sit  
 Wi' their gowd kaims in their hair,  
 A' waiting for their ain dear lords,  
 For them they'll see na mair.

Half owre, half owre to Aberdour,  
 It's fifty fathom deep,  
 And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,  
 Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

The Aberdour here mentioned is more probably the place so called in Aberdeenshire, on the Moray Firth, than Aberdour in Fife. Professor Aytoun states that in the island of Papa Stronsay, one of the Orcadian group lying over against Norway, there is a large grave or tumulus which has been known to the inhabitants from time immemorial as 'The Grave of Sir Patrick Spens.' Though the storm first burst upon the ship soon after it had sailed from Norway, it might have drifted towards the Orkney Islands, and finally sunk near Papa Stronsay, where the body of Sir Patrick Spens might have been washed ashore and buried.

In consequence of this disaster a new Abbot of Balmerino would have to be elected in 1281, but his name is not certainly known; and after this period we have only notices of certain Abbots at particular dates, without the means of ascertaining precisely when their respective reigns began and ended. The Melrose Chronicle, which has supplied us with so many notices of the early Abbots, ends in the year 1270.



Perhaps the next Abbot was THOMAS, who witnesses a charter granted by Nicholas Hay of Errol—who died about the year 1303—to the Abbey of Cupar-Angus, confirming to that house a gift of an oxgate of land in the Carse of Gowrie, previously made to it.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1285 King Alexander III. grants to the monks a charter of protection for themselves, their lands, their men, and all their possessions and goods, movable and immovable, as well as those of their men; forbidding any one to molest, injure, or bring any unjust charge against them on pain of full forfeiture; or to take their own or their men's cattle in pledge in any part of the kingdom except in royal burghs, or for their debts; and commanding all sheriffs and bailiffs to compel those who owe the monks anything to make just and prompt payment of the same, on proof of their indebtedness.<sup>2</sup>

In 1286 Hervey of Dundee grants to the convent his house which he had lately caused to be built, with its garden, situated opposite to the house belonging to the monks of Cupar-Angus; reserving his right to occupy it during his lifetime. One of the witnesses to the charter is his brother, Adam the barber.<sup>3</sup>

Symon, son of Symon of Kynner, had given to the Hospital of St. John the Baptist of Jerusalem and the brethren serving God there,<sup>4</sup> for the souls of his parents and predecessors, and for himself, his wife, his heirs, and all his boys, six acres of land in the Westertown of Kynner, with a house held by Mertham, son of Mertham, and a croft; which acres were near to, and west of Brigflat; namely, three acres extending from the house 'to the other road,' and three on the west side of the house extending to the marsh; with the common pasture

<sup>1</sup> Rogers' *Rental Book and Register of the Abbey of Cupar-Angus*, ii. 288.

<sup>2</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 53.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 44.

<sup>4</sup> The Order of the Hospitallers was instituted for the benefit of pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre. They afterwards became military, in order to protect pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem, and were called Knights of St. John. They had numerous possessions in Scotland, as in other countries.





for eighty sheep and their followers of one year, and for four oxen, four cows, and two horses; subject to the condition that Hugo of Kilmanyn, Symon's 'kinsman and most special friend,' and his heirs and assignees, should hold the said land from the Hospital, paying to it a *reddendo* of twelve pence annually. Hugo afterwards grants these six acres, croft, and pasturage, along with ground for the erection of a building, where the house held by Mertham, son of Mertham, was wont to be, to the monks of Balmerino, by whom the *reddendo* of twelve pence is to be paid to the Hospital. This grant is confirmed at Balmerino by Sir John of Kynner in 1286. Among the witnesses to the charters are several of the neighbouring proprietors—Sir Henry and Sir John of Dundemor, Alexander of Ardiste, William of Forret, William de Ramsay of Clatty; also Sir John de Esex,<sup>1</sup> two burgesses of St. Andrews, and the 'community' of that city; Sir William, parson of Fliske; and Adam the chaplain, doubtless of Kilmany.<sup>2</sup>

About this time, when probably some important buildings were being erected at the Abbey, Hugo of Nidyn (Nydie) grants to the convent his whole quarry of Nidyn, that the monks may break and carry away stones from it at their pleasure; also a free road thereto through his land, namely, the road leading from the quarry through the town of Nidyn, on the west side of St. Gregory's chapel, to the ford of Burglyn (Bruckley), as he had caused the same to be used by his waggon in presence of his brother Richard, Matthew Marscall, Adam the monk and many others. He grants also a toft in the town of Nidyn, in which his mother Mary and his grandmother Gunnyld were wont to live; and the monks may also have twenty-four oxen on the common pasture of Nidyn. These were no doubt the draught animals used for the conveyance of stones to the

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<sup>1</sup> John of Kynner is here styled *miles*, while *dominus* is the title (which we have translated *Sir*) given to other three persons. It is not clear on what principle the title *dominus* is applied to these and withheld from the others.

<sup>2</sup> *Chartulary*, Nos. 16, 17, 18.



Abbey; and the toft would be required as a lodging for the monks or their servants during the night, the journey being probably too long for the oxen to go and return on the same day. Hence also the necessity for pasture. Richard, Hugo's brother, afterwards confirms the gift. One of the witnesses is John of Blabolg (Blebo).<sup>1</sup>

William, son and heir of Ældred of Burthlyn, or Burglyn, grants to the monks the old road through his land of Burglyn, by which they were wont to go with their waggons and other carriages to the quarry of Nidyn. And if it should happen that their waggons or carriages had to halt at any time at the ford of Burglyn (at the river Eden) on account of any hindrance in crossing, he gives the monks permission in such a case to unyoke and feed their beasts there, and to stay over night if necessary.<sup>2</sup>

Connected with Nydie is the following donation of somewhat later date. Richard of Nidyn, with consent of his wife Amabilla, grants to the Abbey a portion of land in his tenement of Nidyn, bounded on the east by the march existing there, on the west by the cattle road leading from Nidyn, on the north by the King's highway leading to St. Andrews, and on the south by the great moor. He gives also grass for two cows, one horse, and sixty sheep on the common pasture of Nidyn. One of the witnesses to the charter is John de Haya, laird of Athnauthan (Naughton).<sup>3</sup>

On the 14th of March 1289-90 the Abbot of Balmerino—whose name is not given—was present at a Scottish Convention or Parliament which assembled at Brigham in Berwickshire and confirmed the treaty of Salisbury for the marriage of Margaret the 'Maiden of Norway,' heiress to the Scottish throne, to Prince Edward of England. Along with the others who were present, our Abbot affixed his seal to the deed of agreement. He was also one of 'the community of Scotland'

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, Nos. 46, 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 48.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 50.



—a body not clearly defined—who sent a letter to the English monarch counselling him that the marriage should be effected.<sup>1</sup> The object in view was the union of the two kingdoms. It was, however, frustrated by the lamented death of the young Queen near the Orkney Islands during her voyage to Scotland—an event which led to the disputed succession and the War of Independence:

In the year 1291 the Abbot and convent address a representation to Pope Nicholas IV., to the effect that certain clerics and laymen, alleging that they had some grounds of complaint against them, seized sometimes the monks, sometimes the lay brothers, and at other times their beasts and other property, under pretence of some evil custom, and detained them till they got whatever satisfaction they pleased, though such persons had neither ordinary nor delegated jurisdiction over them. The Pope, therefore, on the 28th of May issues a Bull forbidding any one to molest them on account of the said custom, to seize their goods without warrant of law, or to detain these in any way.<sup>2</sup>

On the same day the Pope addresses another Bull to the Bishop of Dunblane on account of information which had been communicated to him by the Abbot and convent of Balmerino, that certain ‘clerical and ecclesiastical persons, both religious (that is, monastic) and secular,’ and also earls, barons, nobles, knights and other laymen of the cities and dioceses of St. Andrews and Brechin, who held from the monastery and occupied castles, villages, granges, meadows, woods, mills, lands and other immovable goods, subject to an annual duty or rent, were not careful to pay such rent to the Abbot and convent as they were bound to do, whereby no small loss was impending over them and their monastery. In reply to the humble

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<sup>1</sup> *Acts of Parl. Scot.*, vol. i. ; Stevenson's *Documents Illustrative of the History of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 129 ; *Fac-similes of the National MSS. of Scotland*, vol. iii. No. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 59.



petition of the Abbot and convent that the Pope would provide a remedy for this state of things, he orders the Bishop of Dunblane, having first admonished these persons, to compel them by ecclesiastical censure, without appeal, to make entire payment of such rents; provided, however, that he shall not pronounce sentence of excommunication or interdict against their lands without a special injunction to that effect from the Pope himself.<sup>1</sup> We have no means of identifying the persons or possessions indicated by the very comprehensive terms of this Bull.

There remains to be noticed one more Papal Bull, probably of later date than any of the others recorded in the Chartulary, and differing in character from all of them. Other Bulls had been granted in answer to the request of the Abbot and convent combined; but for this one, application had been made to the Pope by the Abbot alone. A proceeding so unusual was, however, only too well justified by the unfortunate state of affairs then existing in the monastery. The Abbot informed the Pope that certain of the monks and lay brothers had fallen into 'the snare of excommunication'—some by laying violent hands on themselves ('on each other' is probably what is meant); some by retaining their own property—a violation of the monastic principle of having all things in common; and others by disobedience to the Abbot, as well as to his predecessors in office, or by forming a conspiracy against him; and that some of the monks while thus 'bound' had performed divine service and received ordination; and he humbly petitioned the Pope to provide 'for their welfare' in these circumstances. Accordingly the Pope, having full confidence in the Abbot's circumspection, grants to his beloved son authority to absolve for this time those monks from the sentences of excommunication according to ecclesiastical form, and to enjoin them in his stead—we know not what, as the remainder of the Bull is wanting in the Chartulary.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 67.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 64.





This Bull is issued by a Pope Nicolas; but in consequence of its not having the date—usually given at the end of such documents—it is uncertain which of the Popes of that name is meant. From the laxity of monastic discipline which the Bull discloses it might be supposed to belong to the pontificate of Nicolas V., which extended from the year 1447 to 1455, by which time it is well known that the cloistral life had greatly degenerated. But as the Balmerino Chartulary which contains the document was most probably written at a date considerably earlier than this, we may conclude that it was a Bull of Pope Nicolas IV., who reigned from 1288 to 1294; in which case the disorders described must have arisen in the Abbey only about sixty years after it was founded. Such laxity of discipline was, however, elsewhere prevalent even at that early period. In 1264 a Cistercian Abbot in England complained that the Order needed reformation in many things, that quarrels increased, that the strictness of monastic discipline was remitted, and that visitations of monasteries were only superficial.

A second ABBOT WILLIAM is the next ruler of the monastery whose name we meet with. A document to be presently mentioned is signed by him on the 7th of July 1296. In that year Edward I. of England, in his attempt to subdue Scotland, made an expedition with an armed force through a great part of the country, and compelled all classes in the districts through which he passed to swear allegiance to him. Setting out from Berwick he went, among other places, to Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Stirling, Perth, Kinclaven Castle, Clunie Castle, where he abode five days, and thence through Forfarshire. At Montrose his vassal, King John Baliol, surrendered himself to him, and was sent in custody to England. It was, apparently, at Montrose that Baliol and others renounced the treaty they had previously made with France against England. On the 7th of July one of the witnesses to this renunciation is



Abbot William of St. Edward's of Balmerino. From Montrose Edward proceeded to Aberdeen, Banff, and Elgin. In returning, he was on Sunday the 5th of August at Arbroath Abbey, 'and it is reported that the Abbot told the Scots that there were only women in England.' On Monday he was at Dundee, on Tuesday at Baligarnache, 'the red castle,' on Wednesday at Perth, on Thursday at the Abbey of Lindores where he remained over the Friday. On Saturday he was at the city of St. Andrews, 'a castle and a good town.' On Sunday the 12th of August he was at Markinch, 'where are only the minster and three houses.'<sup>1</sup> On Monday he was at the Abbey of Dunfermline, 'where nearly all the Kings of Scotland lie.' By Stirling, Linlithgow, and Edinburgh he passed on to Berwick, where he arrived on the 22nd of August. 'And he conquered the realm of Scotland, and searched it, as is above written, within twenty-one weeks, without any more.' At Berwick 'he held his Parliament; and there were all the bishops, earls, barons, abbots, and priors, and the sovereigns of all the common people; and there he received the homages of all, and their oaths that they would be good and loyal to him.' Among those who took the oath of allegiance to him on the 28th of August were 'William, Abbot of Balmorinaghe, and the convent of the same place,' that is, apparently, he for himself, and also as representing the convent; the Prior of St. Andrews, the Abbots of Lindores and Dunfermline, and several Fife lairds. On the 14th March of a year not named homage was performed to Edward by 'John de Kyner,' and by two persons of the name of 'John de la Haye,' one of whom was probably laird of Naughton.<sup>2</sup> It was an ignominious act; but one which in

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<sup>1</sup> Of this church the only original part still remaining is the tower; the top of which, however, has been altered within the present century by the erection on it of a spire and otherwise.

<sup>2</sup> Palgrave's *Documents and Records Illustrating the History of Scotland*, vol. i. pp. 194-95.



the then existing circumstances of the country could hardly have been avoided.<sup>1</sup>

Probably during the rule of Abbot William II. occurs the first certain instance of any portion of the Abbey property being feued to a vassal, on condition of his paying a stipulated feu-duty. The monks possessed house property in Dundee, and being doubtless in need of a place of lodgement and entertainment when they had occasion to repair to that town, which also they would often pass through on their way to Barry, 'Brother William, Abbot of Balmurynach,' and the convent grant in feu-farm, for the convenience of their house, to William Welyenyth and his heirs a certain piece of ground in the burgh of Dundee, lying between the ground of Roger del Wend on the east and the Venel on the west, which Norman of Castle Street (*de rivo castellano*) gave to them in charity; the *reddendo* or feu-duty to be eleven shillings of good and legal sterlings annually, payable in equal instalments at Whitsunday and Martinmas.<sup>2</sup> 'And the said William and his heirs shall provide for us and our successors sufficient hostilage on the said ground as often as we or any of our brethren may happen to repair to the said burgh for the convenience of our house.'<sup>3</sup> It was a common practice, as already stated, for monasteries to have such lodging-places, while as yet there were no inns, in the various places to which their members were in the habit of resorting. They were provided with all needful apartments and furniture. Thus in the year 1552 a feu-charter of certain lands at Barry was granted by the Abbot and convent of Balmerino to Robert Forrester; and the *reddendo* included the furnishing of

<sup>1</sup> Stevenson's *Documents Illustrative of the History of Scotland*, vol. ii. pp. 26-31, 59-77.

<sup>2</sup> The term *Sterling*, 'which originally had reference to the eastern country of the early English moneyers, was afterwards applied to all money of a certain weight and fineness, wherever coined. This was the *denarius*, the well-known penny of silver.'—(C. Innes's *Sketches of Early Scotch History*, p. 111.)

<sup>3</sup> *Chartulary*, No 55.



a house for the Abbot and his factors when they went thither to hold their courts. There was also at Barry, near Deyhouse, a piece of ground called the Abbot's Horseward, which may have been the enclosure for his horse to graze in on the occasion of his visits; or the name may have been derived from its being fenced in for the rearing of horses, to which the monks paid great attention, and for which it is said they erected stables on the Links. The convent had likewise a lodging-house at Anstruther, which will be more fully noticed in the following Chapter.

In the year 1315, at a meeting which was virtually a Parliament, held in the parish church of Ayr, the Abbot of Balmerino, whose name is not given, signed, along with many other persons, a declaration to the effect that Edward Bruce ought to succeed his brother Robert Bruce as King of Scotland, failing heirs - male of the latter. Marjory, the King's daughter, consented to this declaration, which involved a deviation from the principle of strict hereditary succession. It was rendered necessary by the condition of the country at the time; but owing to subsequent events the intended arrangement never took effect.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Robertson's *Index to Records of Charters*.





## CHAPTER VIII

ABBOTS ALAN II., HUGH, PATRICK, AND  
JOHN DE HAYLIS

‘ Years roll on years ; to ages, ages yield ;  
Abbots to abbots, in a line, succeed :  
Religion’s charter their protecting shield  
Till royal sacrilege their doom decreed.’

—BYRON.

ANOTHER ALAN is the next Abbot whose name occurs. In the year 1317 he and the convent enter into an agreement with Gregory de Schyrham, burgess of Dundee, whereby they grant to him two portions of burgage land in Dundee, lying between the ground of Hervey de Duny on the east and that of Simon of the Venel on the west side ; the *reddendo* payable to the Abbey to be forty shillings of sterlings annually. To that part of the record of this transaction which was to be kept by Gregory were affixed both the seal of Abbot Alan and the common seal of the convent ; and to the part which was to remain with the Abbot and convent were attached Gregory’s own seal and the seal of the burgh of Dundee. This was virtually another instance of the feuing of a portion of the Abbey property.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1318 King Robert Bruce, having inspected the

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<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 34. This instrument appears to have been an *indenture*, though it is not so named. ‘ In contracts of this description two exact copies are written on one sheet of parchment—they are then divided, and a copy delivered to each party. To prevent forgery, the parchment is cut in a zig-zag manner (notched or *indented*), so that if any subsequent dispute as to the authenticity of either counterpart should arise, it could be easily settled by putting the two deeds together ; and if they fitted into each other, the controversy was at once terminated.’—Maidment’s *Analecta Scotica*, vol. ii. p. 3.



charters granted to the Abbot and convent by Alexander II., and ascertained from them that the monks of Balmerino and their men inhabiting their lands were, and ought to be free from aids, armies, taxes, and all exactions, dues, and secular services; so that no such things, but only their prayers, could be demanded of them by the King or his officers; approves and confirms by his letters patent the tenor of these charters; and prohibits justiciaries, sheriffs, and all his other officers and servants from imposing on the monks any such burdens, on pain of full forfeiture. The document is dated at Scone the 12th of June; and a month later the King, being then in Perth, grants and confirms to the convent, by letters patent, the whole of his fishings of the 'Stok on the north side of the Tay' (near Perth); with the right of fixing stakes for hanging and drying their nets on the ground nearest thereto.<sup>1</sup>

William de Candela, whose ancestor is said to have received from the Crown, in the twelfth century, a gift of the lands of Anstruther, from which place the family—one of the oldest in Fife—afterwards took the surname of Anstruther, had granted to the Abbey a piece of ground, 'seven score and ten feet' in length, adjacent to, and on the east side of the town of Anstruther, between the sea and the road leading to Crail, and had marked it off by boundaries, so that the monks might extend their marches seawards as much as they could; to be held by them and their assignees of him and his heirs in feu-farm for ever; the *reddendo* to be 'only half a merk of legal sterlings annually in name of blench duty.' He had also granted to the convent and their men and assignees every such liberty as their convenience might require to go and return through his lands—meadow and sown land excepted—with the privilege of leading water from the well under Motlau (Mote Law or

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<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, Nos. 54, 57.



*Court Hill?*), on the north side of the said land, to their buildings by an underground aqueduct of stone or lead whenever they pleased; on condition that as often as they dug up the ground for this purpose they should again cover the aqueduct with earth. Henry, laird of Aynstroyir, and son of this William de Candela, confirms this grant made 'a short time ago' by his father; and also concedes to the monks and their assignees pasture for four cows and one horse in the common pasture of Anstruther. They may have also a brewery on their land free from all exaction or hindrance; and they may let their booths belonging to the said land when and to whom they please; and those who inhabit the said booths may spread their nets to dry upon his land when necessary; the *reddendo* to him and his heirs to be a hundred salt fish from every barrel; the monks and their assignees, if they hold the said land *in capite*, to be exempted from this burden. He also grants to the monks and their men clay, earth, and water for the erection and repair of their buildings, and for brewing whenever they please; and they may dry their malt and corn outside of their own and within his land; but their men must freely communicate with his men in selling and buying. And if the monks or their men shall incur any loss or damage through defect of his warranty and defence of their rights—which Heaven forbid—he subjects himself and his heirs to the jurisdiction of the Bishop of St. Andrews or his officials, who may compel them to make good such loss or damage. The list of witnesses to the charter of Henry of Anstruther includes—besides Adam, Prior of Pittenweem, and others—Thomas of Balcasky and 'Henry called Herwart.'<sup>1</sup> The last two, along with James, Bishop of St. Andrews, are also among the witnesses to a charter granted to the monks of Dryburgh by Henry of Anstruther, laird of the same, and his sponse

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<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 49.



Matilda, conferring on them a house and garden, with an acre of land in his 'town' of Anstruther. The Bishop was evidently James Bane, who filled the see of St. Andrews from 1328 to 1332. It thus appears that it was the same laird who was a benefactor of both Abbeys, and that Henry of Anstruther's charter to the monks of Balmerino was granted about the same time as the other. The same Henry Anstruther of that Ilk confirmed to the monks of Dryburgh at some time before 1332—as appears from the name of one of the witnesses to the charter—a gift of three booths in Anstruther, made by 'Henry and William his predecessors.'<sup>1</sup> The surname De Candela seems not to have been entirely discontinued by the family at the date of the above-mentioned William de Candela's grant to the monks of Balmerino, though, as we have seen,<sup>2</sup> another 'Henry of Ainstrother' had been witness to a charter more than a century earlier than the last-named Henry, and may have been one of the 'predecessors' he refers to—possibly his grandfather. The donations to the two Abbeys seem to indicate that Anstruther was an important fishing centre even at that early period; and they were probably made at the request of the monks of Balmerino and Dryburgh, in order that they might be provided with an abundant supply of fish for consumption on fast-days.

The monks of Balmerino had afterwards on their ground at Anstruther a chapel, dedicated to St. Ayle, and also a lodging-house for themselves. In 1535 Thomas Wood, its occupant, had to uphold the former and to provide the latter. By a fen-charter, which he obtained in that year, of the Abbey property there he was bound to keep in repair

<sup>1</sup> Sibbald's *History of Fife and Kinross*, pp. 341-2 (ed. 1803), where William de Candela's donation to the monks of Balmerino is erroneously stated to have been confirmed by his son *William*, instead of *Henry*; the date is set down as 1231 without any authority; and the extent of the ground given is stated inaccurately.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, page 57.





the roof, walls, windows, and internal decorations of St. Ayle's chapel; and also to receive in kindly hospitality the Abbot and any of the monks when they went to Anstruther, and provide for them and theirs beds, pillows, and all other necessary and suitable things; but they were to pay the cost of their own food and drink. In the same way, when 'the servant and provider of the convent' went thither to purchase fish, Wood had to furnish him and his servants with beds, pillows, and other necessities; and also a house to store the fish in till they could be carried to the monastery; but, like the monks, he was to pay for food and drink.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1331 John of Dundemor grants to the monks of Balmerino the use of all the water running through his land of Dumberauch (Dumbarrow in Abernethy parish) with permission to conduct it to their mill of Petgornoch, and to dig turf for the construction of the channel, and for its repair when necessary; and he subjects himself and his heirs and assignees to a penalty of ten pounds sterling to be paid 'towards the subsidy for the Holy Land, or to the fabric of the church of St. Andrews,' if they should contravene this grant. The charter is witnessed at Dundemor by a distinguished company consisting of James, Bishop of St. Andrews; Adam, Abbot of Lindores; Sir David de Berkeley; Sir Alexander de Seton; Alan de Claphain; and others.<sup>2</sup>

Between the years 1328 and 1332 John de Haya, Laird of Athnauthan (Ardnaughton or Naughton) grants to the convent a charter concerning a piece of ground situated between his land of Galuran (Gauldry) and their land of Duchwarner (Dochrone), the right to which had been the subject of a long standing dispute between them and his

<sup>1</sup> *Charters of St. Ayle's*, in possession of the proprietor, William Halson Anderson, Esq., which include a beautifully written charter by 'Antonius, Cardinal of the Four Crown Saints,' dated at Rome on the 14th June, seventh year of Pope Paul III. (1541). Mr. Anderson courteously lent these charters to the Author for his perusal.

<sup>2</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 52.



predecessors the Lairds of Naughton. The ground in question was thus bounded—‘Beginning on the west side of the village of Galuran where his land and theirs meet, and extending eastward along the ancient King’s highway leading to the Ferry of Portinkrag; and from the said highway southward in a straight line to the fountain called Bridiis Wel; and thence to a certain stone lying on the moor; and thence to the marches of Kilmanyn; and thence to the footpath called Scongate; and then ascending along this footpath to the west side of Galuran already mentioned.’ To put an end to all disputes between him and the monks, and for the weal of his soul, and of the souls of all his predecessors and successors, he by this charter renounces, for himself and his heirs and assignees for ever, any claim or right of property which he or his predecessors had or could have had at any time in the said land, and gives it over to the convent in all time coming; in testimony whereof he affixes his seal to the charter, which is witnessed by James, Bishop of St. Andrews; William de Lyndesay, archdeacon of the same church; Sir Davit de Berkley, sheriff of Fyff; Sir David de Lyndesay, Laird (*dominus*) of Balynbrey (Ballinbreich); John of Kyner, John of Foreth and others. The place where the charter was granted and signed is not stated; but it was probably either Naughton or the Abbey.<sup>1</sup>

Galuran in this charter, as printed, is a mistake for Galurau, that is, *Gallozeraw*, the proper name of the village. In the Manuscript it is twice written Galuran. In another copy also of the Chartulary, written in old cursive hand and now in the Advocates’ Library, the word is Galuran. The first notice of the place I have met with is in a charter granted in the early part of the thirteenth century by John de Haya of Adnachtan (Naughton) of a toft at Galuraw ‘in the territory of Adnachtan’ to the monks of Cupar-Angus.<sup>2</sup> The *Raw* may

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Rogers’s *Rental Book of Cupar-Angus Abbey*, vol. i. p. 342.



have been a roadway, but more probably a row of houses. In an old charter of Naughton estate the word is written Gallowraw. In the sixteenth century it occurs in the forms Galraw and Galra. Subsequently it is written Galray, Gallary, Gallerie, Galdrie, and now Gauldry. The form Galdrie first appears in the Kirk-session books about the middle of last century; and old people in that village till a recent period pronounced the name without the insertion of the letter *d*. It is a curious circumstance that other two place-names have undergone a similar change. Gallowraw near Cupar-Angus—so written in the sixteenth century—appears afterwards in the form Gallowray, and is now called Gauldry. A place in Forfarshire near the North Esk was in the year 1505 called Galloraw, afterwards Galraw, and is now written Gallerie; and though the process of phonetic corruption has meanwhile been arrested, the insertion of the letter *d* in this word also may come in course of time! All these places doubtless received their original name from the circumstance that in the feudal ages criminals were executed at them, or in their immediate vicinity. As regards the barony of Naughton, the place of execution, which must at *some* time have been at Gallowhill, may have previously been at Gallowraw, about half a mile westward. If it was always at Gallowhill, then Gallowraw may have been so called from its being the way of approach—the row or route—to the place of doom. From the ancient connection of Balmerino with St. Bridgid's monastery of Abernethy, Bridiis Wel or Bride's Well may have been dedicated to, or named after St. Bridgid, or Bride. In consequence of the drainage of the land, this well cannot now be identified with certainty; but the one beside the open space and green in the south part of Gauldry seems to fit the position of Bride's Well, as described in the charter.

In the year 1336 the resources of the Abbey were subjected to a severe strain, and its monks were compelled to submit to what, from a patriotic point of view, they must have felt



to be a great indignity. King David II. being then a minor, and having been sent by his friends to France for safety, Edward III. of England invaded Scotland; and on his return from an expedition to the north came to Perth with Edward Baliol, who in 1332 had been crowned at Scone as the vassal king of Scotland. The walls of Perth had a short time previously been levelled with the ground by the partisans of these kings. The English monarch now ordered six monasteries, namely, those of Dunfermline, St. Andrews, Lindores, Balmerino, Cupar-Angus, and Arbroath, to rebuild these walls 'very strongly with squared stones and mortar, and to a suitable height; with towers, and gates, and cornices'; which was accordingly done at their expense. 'Now the building of this town entailed much hardship upon the aforesaid places; for the Prior of St. Andrews paid 280 merks of good money in cash for the building of the tower and gate. In like manner the Abbot of Lindores built the Speygate and the tower which stands at the bend of the water, as a token whereof that tower is commonly called *The Monk Tower* to this day.' Such is the account given in *The Book of Pluscardin*. According to Fordun, the monasteries were only required to build the three greater sides of the wall,<sup>1</sup> with as many towers, whereby they were greatly impoverished. It is probable that the Abbot of Balmerino was one of those described by Fordun as 'the Abbots, Priors, and Estates of Fife, Fothreve, Stratherne, and Gowry' who had submitted to Baliol after the victory he had gained at Dupplin Moor in the year 1332, and who were present at his coronation at Scone, which followed that disaster. There is, however, no reason to believe that their submission and attendance were quite voluntary acts.<sup>2</sup>

Sometime before the year 1356 Davit de Berkeley, with consent of Margaret his spouse, grants to the Abbey his fishing

<sup>1</sup> *Fartas* in his *Chronicle*; in the *Scotichronicon* the word is *portas* (gates).

<sup>2</sup> *Liber Pluscardensis*, ix. 34; Fordun's *Chronicle*; *Annals*, cxlvii, clv; *Scotichronicon*, ed. Goodall, vol. ii. p. 323.





on the Tay, in Angus, called Cruchuc, situated between Partinkrag and Dundee. It is probably this fishing which afterwards appears under the names of West Cruik, Ferrydurris, and Kilcraig. Duncan, Earl of Fife, is one of the witnesses to the charter.<sup>1</sup> The boundaries of the fishing ground show that Partinkrag, or Portinkrag, was the name then applied to the place now called Broughty (Brugh-Tay, the castle on the Tay); and this is confirmed by similar language in the Register of Arbroath Abbey; from which we learn that Gillebride, Earl of Angus, gave the land of Portincraig, with the fishings, both of which were on the north shore of the Tay, towards the founding of a hospital there, which subsequent Earls transferred to the monks of Arbroath.<sup>2</sup>

This grant of the fishing of Cruchuc is the last of the benefactions to the Abbey recorded in the existing Chartulary. But several other possessions bestowed on it by unknown donors, and not so recorded, still remain to be mentioned.

One of these consisted of thirty acres of land near Crail, called Gastoun. This land was conferred by King Alexander II., in the year 1233, on Walter, formerly the 'Messenger' to the then recently deceased Queen Ermengarde, 'for his service,' and probably in fulfilment of her wishes. It was then called Drumrauach (Drumrack), or formed part of Drumrauach, and is described as situated in the moor of Crail, near to the lands of Ysaac de Drumrauach and on the east side of them. It afterwards passed into the possession of William of Gallistoun (Gastoun), who either gave his name to it or, more probably, derived his name from it—the word being apparently a corruption of Gallows' Town. In the year 1278 he resigned it to Sir John Hay, Laird of Balcomy, from whom it was subsequently acquired by Adam Marescall, who is elsewhere designed

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, No. 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. Vetus de Aberbr.*, pp. 35-37, 81. At (South) Ferrytown, now Portincraig, there was anciently a chapel dedicated to St. John, with 'the lands of Chapeltown.'—(*Reg. Mag. Sigill.*, vol. vi. No 523.)



of Segy. As the charter by which the Abbey obtained this land is wanting in the Chartulary, which, however, contains the other documents relating to it, the donor and date of the gift are unknown. But from the circumstance that 'Adam the monk' is in the Abbey charters mentioned in connection with a Matthew Marseall, it appears not improbable that Adam Marseall and Adam the monk were one and the same person, who may have conferred the land in question on the convent when he became a member of it.<sup>1</sup>

The Abbey possessed also Gadvan, or Gadden, and Johnstoun, both of them in Dunbog parish. It had a Preceptory or small religious establishment at Gadvan, which is said to have occupied the site of the present mansion of Dunbog, and to have included the land forming its garden and enclosures, and also what is now the glebe of the minister of Dunbog—the whole extending to twenty-four acres. When or by whom these possessions were bestowed on the Abbey does not appear. The first notice we have of them is in the year 1486, under which date the Register of Arbroath Abbey<sup>2</sup> specifies the *tithes* of Johnstoun and of 'the acres of the Prior of Dunbolg' as belonging to that house, on which the church and tithes of Dunbog parish had been conferred, according to Sibbald, by Alexander Cumin, Earl of Buchan, in the reign of Alexander II. The next mention of Gadvan and Johnstoun does not occur till the year 1529, when a feu-charter of 'the lands of the town of Johnstoun, between the lands of Balmaddy and Dunboug,' was granted by the Abbot and convent of Balmerino and 'Sir Andrew Gagye,<sup>3</sup> Master of the Place of Gaduane, annexed to the said monastery,' to John Betoun of Creich, whose father, David Betoun, had previously purchased the lands of Dunbog and Contrahills from Alexander, Lord Home. The charter of 1529, which, was confirmed in

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, Nos. 41-43, 46-48.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. de Aberbr.* Pars Altera, p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. iii. No. 898.



the same year by King James V., received 'the manual subscription of the said Andrew' in addition to the common seal of the convent.<sup>1</sup> Again, in 1603, James Betoun of Creich obtained a Crown charter of various lands, including—besides the barony of Dunbog and Contrahills—'the lands of Gadven with the manse (*mansio*) and meadow, of old held of the monastery of Balmerino, excepting the chapel of the same; also the town and lands of Johnstoun formerly held of the said monastery and of the Preceptors of the Place of Gadven annexed to the said monastery.'<sup>2</sup>

The establishment at Gadvan thus included a manse or domicile, and also a chapel for the use of its members—which could not have been identical with Dunbog parish church, as this belonged to Arbroath Abbey—and its Superior was indifferently styled Master, Prior, or Preceptor, who, while acting as the deputy of the Abbot, appears to have held a semi-independent position of his own; as is proved by his signing the charter of 1529 in his official capacity, while the Abbot and convent affixed to it the seal of the chapter.

A Crown charter of the year 1630 mentions 'the third part of Eister Colsey' (also called Coilliessy or Cowissay, in the parish of Abernethy) 'in the barony of Ballinbreiche, which formerly belonged to the Preceptory or Ministry of Gaduane, annexed to the Abbacy of Balmirrinnoch'; and specifies, as part of the *reddendo* to be paid by its owner, 'the ancient duty and wonted service [rendered] to the said Place of Gaduane.'<sup>3</sup>

Sibbald says that two or three monks resided at Gadvan. It is more probable that its occupants were lay brothers superintended by the Prior, and cultivating the land attached to the Preceptory; for the Cistercian statutes did not permit monks to reside permanently out of the monastery. Pos-

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. iii. No. 898.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. vi. No. 1492.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. viii. No. 1543.



sibly, however, the strict observance of this, as of other of the early rules of the Order, may have been relaxed; for the Prior or Preceptor of the establishment at Dunbog was himself a monk of Balmerino Abbey. This appears from the fact that Andrew Gagye, who held the office in the year 1529, signs, along with the Abbot and monks, various charters between 1549 and 1551; which he does, not as Prior of Dunbog, but as a member of the convent. As he would have frequent occasion to ride over from Dunbog to Balmerino, he would thus have opportunities of signing charters. He may, however, have permanently returned to the Abbey before those years, and have been succeeded by another monk of the convent as Prior of Dunbog.

It would be interesting to know when and under what circumstances Colsey, Johnstoun, and Gadvan were acquired by the Abbey; and more especially how a Preceptory or Ministry came to be established at the latter of these places rather than at any other of the detached possessions of the monks. The expression 'annexed' to the monastery of Balmerino, employed in reference to Gadvan in the above-quoted charters, is unusual in documents connected with the Abbey property. It suggests the idea that there may have existed at Gadvan at an earlier period a religious establishment of some kind, which was endowed with the lands of Gadvan, Johnstoun, and 'the third part of Colsey'; and that this establishment, with its whole endowments, was subsequently conferred on Balmerino Abbey. There is, however, no positive proof of the correctness of this supposition, though it is a probable one. Preceptory was a term often used by the military Orders.

Henry Laing mentions a 'Tack of the Teinds of Lochleven, by Robert, Abbot of Balmerino, to James, Earl of Morton, A.D. 1530.'<sup>1</sup> But as the convent certainly possessed no church in that district, and as no other reference to such

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<sup>1</sup> *Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Scottish Seals* (Bann. Club).





tithes has been found, there is evidently some mistake in the title of the Tack. Perhaps it should be a 'Tack of the lands of Lochmylne' to be presently mentioned.

Rent-rolls of the Abbey property and Crown charters of dates subsequent to the Reformation enumerate among its possessions 'the lands of Lochymilne (or Lochmylne) with the milne and loch thereof, lying in the barony of Abernethy'; Nether Aberargie in the parish of Abernethy; 'the lands of Carpullie (Carpowie or Carpow) situated between the lands of Dunmore and Quarrelhop'—now forming part of Glenduckie farm, near Dunbog;<sup>1</sup> lands of Pitgrunzie, or Geenside, in the barony of Abernethy; besides the salmon fishings of Poldrait, on the North Inch of Perth; and of Stockgreen, or Stock and Garth, or Stoking-garth, on the Tay at Kinfauns. Certain portions of land in Balmerino parish, as at present bounded, which did not at first belong to the Abbey, must have been afterwards acquired by it; namely, the lands somewhere about Balmerino which once belonged to Thomas de Lundin; and those of Cathills, now forming part of Naughton estate, if they were not identical with De Lundin's lands, and if, as is most probable, they were not included in the donations of Queen Ermengarde.

The monks of Balmerino had now extensive landed property in several parts of Fife, Angus, and Perthshire; burghage possessions in various towns, and houses to lodge in when they had occasion to go thither; the revenues of three parish churches; three chapels—probably built before this time—in their outlying dependencies; building materials from the quarry of Nydie; water supply for their several mills; peats from Swannire; game from their lands of Balmerino and Barry; sea-fish from Anstruther, and salmon from the Tay. The resources of the convent were thus both ample

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<sup>1</sup> As an earlier form of the word Carpow was *Carpullie*, so the ancient name of another Carpow, situated between Newburgh and Abernethy, was *Kerpul*, a cognate word.



and varied. Most of their possessions had been granted to them before the end of the reign of Alexander III. No more monasteries for monks were erected in Scotland after that event except the Charterhouse at Perth. The age of church endowment was past; and the Chartularies of other Abbeys as well as that of Balmerino record few donations after that period, but only the administration of property conferred on them ere the struggle for national independence had, by the sacrifices it involved, greatly impoverished the people and checked their liberality.<sup>1</sup> Nor, indeed, was it desirable that monasteries should be farther enriched.

The minute specification of boundaries and privileges, which so many of the Abbey charters contain, proves that property had acquired a degree of value, and that the country had made advances in civilization and material wealth greater than are commonly supposed to have marked those remote ages. The reigns of William the Lion and the Second and Third Alexanders were eminently prosperous and beneficial. The War of the Succession which followed was the first of many causes which checked the nation's progress during several centuries following; and it is asserted by our best informed historians that the Scottish people were never so wealthy and civilized at any period down to the Union with England in 1707 as at the death of Alexander III. in 1286. The flour-

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<sup>1</sup> Yet so late as between the years 1531 and 1538 Master Gilbert Strath-auchin, canon of Aberdeen and Moray, founded in the south part of the church of the neighbouring parish of Creich a chapel; and in the latter year, Master James Strathachin, his nephew, executor, and canon of Aberdeen and Moray, mortified, in terms of his uncle's will, annual-rents amounting to forty merks from various lands north and south of the Tay in pure charity to Master William Seitoun and Sir Thomas Mortoun, chaplains, and their successors serving at the altar of the Blessed Trinity, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Blessed Andrew the Apostle in the said chapel with twenty shillings annually for the sustentation of the said altar, &c.; the patronage of the chapel to pertain alternately to the nephew of the founder and his heirs and the heirs of his executor; whom failing, to Andrew Seitoun of Perbroth and his heirs-male bearing the name and arms of Seitoun; and the said chaplains to give account of the 20s. of annual-rent to the Abbot and convent of Lundoris.—(*Reg. Sig. Mag.*, vol. iii. No. 1877.)



ishing state of the country previous to that calamitous event, and the change in this respect produced by it are referred to in the following brief 'Sang' preserved by Wynton,<sup>1</sup> and supposed to be the oldest fragment of Scottish poetry extant:—

'Quhen Alysandyr-oure Kyng wes dede,  
 That Scotland led in lüive and lé,<sup>2</sup>  
 Away wes sons<sup>3</sup> off ale and brede,  
 Off wyne and wax, off gamyn and glé :  
 'Oure gold wes changyd into lede.  
 Cryst, borne into Vyrghnyté,  
 Succoure Scotland and remede,  
 That stad<sup>4</sup> [is in] perplexyté.'

It is not to be supposed that the large possessions of the monastery were devoted to the sole purpose of maintaining, probably, some five and twenty monks and a greater number of lay brothers. Their own portions were indeed but scanty. Much would be required for the support of their servants and dependants who, along with themselves, were engaged in the cultivation of their lands, the working of their mills and fishings, and the management of their cattle and sheep. The Abbey buildings, too, would from time to time be receiving additions and repairs; and we may believe that no expense would be spared in beautifying the great Abbey Church, though it was not the practice of monks to expend much on the fabric of those churches which had been given to them as sources of revenue. The Abbot's outlay in the maintenance of his own dignity, as well as in the entertainment of distinguished guests; in attending Parliament, and the Diocesan Synods, and 'General Provincial Councils' of the Church; and in his periodical visits to the parent monastery of Cîteaux as well as his annual visits to that of Melrose, would be considerable; while much would be spent in charity to the poor, for which monks were celebrated.

<sup>1</sup> *The Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland*, Book VII., 3619.

<sup>2</sup> Love and tranquillity.

<sup>3</sup> Plenty.

<sup>4</sup> Standing.



In consequence of the paucity of existing records our knowledge of the system adopted in the management of the Abbey property, especially in the earlier periods of its history, is to a great extent inferential rather than positive. Small and detached possessions situated at a distance from the monastery were probably from the first let to tenants. In certain other places, however, the monks appear to have kept the greater part of their lands in their own hands, cultivating them from Granges, or spacious farm-steadings, where were lodged the lay brothers and hired servants who performed the heavier part of the field work; and where also the Cistercian rules required an oratory, or chapel, to be provided for their use. On the north side of the Cloister Garth at Balmerino there was such a Grange, of which a portion still exists; though it would not be necessary to have a chapel there, as in all probability the lay brothers and servants worshipped at first in the Abbey church. This Grange may be supposed to have been for a considerable time the centre of agricultural operations for a great part of the Abbey lands in the parish (the arable portion of which was then much smaller than at present), while probably the cattle were housed at the place still called 'Byres,' at a short distance from the monastery, and the crops of grain stacked and threshed at a barn which might be situated on the rising ground east of the ravine of Barnden. At a later period another Grange was erected, no doubt from considerations of convenience, on the southern slope of the high ridge overlooking Balmerino, from which the lands in that quarter would be cultivated. It was called the New Grange. An oratory may have existed there, though no mention of it occurs. It was contrary to the rules of the Cistercian Order that a Grange should be superintended by any of the monks except the cellarer of the Abbey; nor were the monks usually sent to work at distant Granges, except at haymaking and in harvest. The cellarer would doubtless have charge of the





Grange at Balmerino; while New Grange would be managed by the lay brother called the master of the Grange, under the superintendence of the cellarer. At Barry the monks had another Grange, from which their lands situated there, or the chief portion of them, would also be cultivated by the lay brothers and hired servants under a Master. There is no mention of any Grange in connection with the extensive Abbey property of Pitgorno in Strathmiglo parish; from which it may be inferred that these distant lands were let to tenants from the first. The Papal Bull of the year 1291, already quoted, shows that a considerable portion of the Abbey property must have been let to tenants by that time; and probably soon after it a piece of ground in Dundee was feued. At a later period, the system of letting and even of feuing the Abbey lands came to be extensively practised. As regards the wooded lands near the Abbey, the Wood of Balmerino, extending along the south bank of the Tay to Corbieden, and no doubt also the game, were under the charge of the Abbey forester. He appears to have lived near the site of the present mansion of Birkhill, where certain lands were termed Forester's lands till the beginning of the seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup>

ABBOT HUGH is the next Superior of the monastery whose name occurs. He witnesses a charter granted by Thomas the Senescal, or Steward, Earl of Angus, to Andrew Perkier, burgess of Dundee, of the lands of Kingennie and others. The charter is undated, but was confirmed at Perth by David II. on the 10th of March 1368.<sup>2</sup> Abbot Hugh is witness to a charter which the names of the other witnesses prove to have been granted between the years 1354 and 1370; and as a successor was in office in 1369, the time of Abbot Hugh's rule must be limited by this date.<sup>3</sup> Nothing more is known of him.

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. vi. No. 1267.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii. No. 112.



Petruccio Ubaldino, a citizen of Florence who visited this country in the sixteenth century, while referring in his *Description of Scotland* to certain of our monasteries which had been none the less honoured in ancient times as houses of religion by their being also schools of literature, mentions Balmerino Abbey as one of four which had been most esteemed in this respect; the others being those of Cupar-Angus, Portmoak, and Pittenweem.<sup>1</sup> Yet with the doubtful exceptions of St. Alan the first Abbot and the author of the *Acts of the Monastery of Balmerino*, I have not hitherto found any monk of Balmerino mentioned as having attempted literary work. There appears, however, to have been written between the years 1349 and 1355 a portion of the Annals of Scotland of which a member of the convent was probably the author. The book was never printed, and what has become of it is unknown; but it was thus described in the year 1708 by Dr. Mackenzie, who had both seen and perused it:<sup>2</sup>—

### Liber Coenobii De Balmerinoch

‘This book is a fair MS. in a large quarto, in parchment, belonging to the Right Honourable John Lord Balmerinoch. Who the author was is uncertain, but it is most presumable he hath been an Abbot or Monk in the same Abbey, and hath written his history in the reign of David II., for, relating the title of King Robert Bruce to the Crown, and mentioning his daughter Marjory, he takes notice of her son Robert as Steward of Scotland *anno* 1349 without designing him either Earl of Strathern, which title he got in 1356, or King, which he was in 1370 on the death of his uncle King David II. Moreover, he mentions Elisabeth Mure as only wife to the above Lord Robert Stewart, which proves our author wrote before the Stewart married his second wife Eupham Ross, Countess-dowager of Murray [in 1355].

<sup>1</sup> *Descrittione del Regno di Scotia*, p. 3 (Bann. Club ed.), first published at Antwerp in 1588.

<sup>2</sup> *The Lives and Characters of the most eminent Writers of the Scots Nation*, by George Mackenzie, M.D., vol. i. p. 468.



which, by the bye, plainly shows that the blot of bastardy thrown upon Robert III. is of a modern date, and not vouched by our latter Historians from the properest authorities. This author's chief design seems to have been an history of Scotland from the death of Alexander III. to his own time; taking in such antecedent particulars as had a necessary relation to the subject and period of time he was engaged upon. To give his reader a clear view of affairs, he deduces the genealogy of the Royal family from Malcolm III. and Queen Margaret, and is more exact and particular as to the Pedegree of the two principal competitors, viz. :—Bruce and Baliol, and their descendants, than any I have hitherto observed. He is very exact in his chronology as to the death of the excellent King Alexander; the constituting of the six Governors; the death of Duncan, Earl of Fife and Queen Margaret; the competition of Bruce and Baliol &c.; the Battels of Berwick, Dunbar &c.; the resignation of Baliol; submission of the Scots to King Edward; the attempts of Wallace and his successors in office; the death of Cuming by King Robert, whose repeated misfortunes in his entry to the Government he relates, and ends his history as to that King with his victory obtained over Cuming, Earl of Buchan, and Philip Mowbray, at Inverury, in *anno* 1308. And then glanceth at the coronation of King David Bruce, and concludes his book with an account that John Stewart Earl of Angus, Thomas Randolph son and heir to the Earl of Murray, and other nobles were knighted at that solemnity.'

Scottish monasteries frequently possessed for the use of their inmates a copy, or an abridgment, of Fordun's *Chronicle*, or of the *Scotichronicon*. Of this nature, probably, were the *Liber Balmerinensis*, *Liber Lindorensis*, *Liber Cuprensis*, and *Liber Sconensis*, which Sir Robert Sibbald, in his *Memoria Balfouriana*, mentions in a list of MSS. collected by Sir James Balfour—the titles of these volumes denoting nothing more than that they belonged to the respective Abbeys.<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Sibbald's work is a small and now very rare 12mo volume entitled, '*Memoria Balfouriana*, sive Historia Rerum Pro Literis promovendis, gestarum a clarissimis Fratribus Balfouriis D.D. Jacobo, Barone de Kinaird, Equite, Leone Rege Armorum; et D.D. Andrea, M.D., Equite Aurato—Authore R.S. M.D. Equite Aurato. Edinburgi &c. MDC, XC, IX.' The list of MSS. is at page 20 of the volume.



*Liber Pluscardensis*, while it is founded on the *Scotichronicon*, contains additions of historical value, and is believed to have been written in the Priory of Pluscardin. The *Liber Coenobii de Balmerinoch* (Book of the Convent of Balmerino), as described by Mackenzie, appears to have been not a copy of any known History, but an original work, and written before the composition of Fordun's Chronicle. Its title, and the fact that it was the property of Lord Balmerino,<sup>1</sup> seem to prove that it was a different volume from the *Liber Balmerinensis*, which belonged to Sir James Balfour; while the *Liber de Balmorinach*, or Chartulary of Balmerino Abbey, is not an historical narrative. Mackenzie's conjecture is therefore in all probability correct; and we may reasonably conclude that the *History* which he describes not only *belonged* to Balmerino Abbey, but was an original work written by one of its Abbots or monks.

ABBOT PATRICK was probably Hugh's successor. On the 20th of April 1369 he and the convent grant to William of Aynstruyir and Mariota of Potness (?) his spouse, and their heirs, a feu-charter of land in the burgh of Crail, situated in its High Street and on the north side thereof, between the ground of Laurence of Willmerston on the east, and the ground of St. Mary on the west side; the feu-duty to be three shillings sterling annually; and the property to revert to the convent on a failure of heirs or non-payment of the feu-duty. The ground thus feued had been previously held of the Abbey by the said Mariota and Richard [son] of Walter, no doubt her

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<sup>1</sup> In the collection of Balmerino Papers now in the library of Lord Balmerino's descendant the Earl of Moray, at Donibristle, there is a MS. of Bower's *Scotichronicon*. But this cannot be the MS. described by Mackenzie, not only on account of its different nature, but because in a colophon at the end of the MS. it is stated to have been written by one of the chaplains of St. Giles's, Edinburgh, who bequeathed it to the canons of Inchcolm. From them it no doubt came into the possession of Lord Doune, Commendator of Inchcolm and ancestor of Lord Moray.—(See Skene's *Fordun*, pp. xv, xvi; and *Sixth Report of Hist. MSS. Commission*, p. 635.)





previous husband. The charter is confirmed to George Dyschinton, its subsequent owner, a burghess of Crail, by Richard, a later Abbot of Balmerino, but the date of the confirmation is not given.<sup>1</sup> Abbot Patrick is a witness to a charter, which the names of the other witnesses prove to have been granted between the years 1373 and 1381, by Sir Andrew de Leslie of that Ilk in favour of Hugh Barclay.<sup>2</sup> He is a witness to another charter, granted by David de Barclay, Laird of Brechin, to Hugh Barclay his cousin, of the lands of Kindesleith (Kinsleith). The names of the other witnesses show that the date of the charter was between 1354 and 1385, but do not enable us to fix it more precisely.<sup>3</sup>

Some one having complained to the King that another person had unjustly sued him in the court of the Abbot of Balmerino concerning a 'lay tenement' which the complainer held of the King *in capite*, or by a charter the cognizance of which belonged by right to the King's court, the King addresses a letter to the Abbot of Balmorynaught, enjoining him to desist from entertaining the case if the facts were as alleged. Though this letter appears only in a collection of ecclesiastical styles or forms of writs, it seems to refer to a real incident. The precise date is not given, but it must have been between the years 1371 and 1399.<sup>4</sup>

JOHN DE HAYLIS was probably the next Abbot. His name occurs in various documents ranging from 1408 to 1435; and he appears to have borne a prominent part in the public affairs of his time.

In the year 1408 King Henry IV. of England grants to this Abbot a letter of safe-conduct while returning from France

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<sup>1</sup> Charter belonging to the Burgh of Crail, which the author had an opportunity of perusing.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Leslie's *Hist. Rec. of the Family of Leslie*, vol. i. p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Reg. de Panmure*, vol. ii. pp. 222-3.

<sup>4</sup> Robertson's *Concilia Scotie*, vol. i. p. cccxxviii.



through England. The following is a translation of this document, which was issued under the Privy Seal of that monarch :—

‘SAFE-CONDUCT FOR THE ABBOT OF BALMORENOGH, ABOUT TO  
RETURN FROM FRANCE.

‘The King, by his letters-patent which are to extend to the 1st of March next, has taken into his safe and secure conduct, and under his special protection, keeping, and defence John Hayles, Abbot of Balmorenoh in Scotland, in his coming and passing safely and securely out of the kingdom of France through the dominions of the King of England towards the parts of Scotland, by sea and land, according to his own pleasure, along with twelve horsemen in his company; and also their horses, goods, and equipment of whatsoever kind, without any annoyance or demand on the part of the King, or of any other person in his dominions; the King being witness, at Westminster, the 25th of October.’<sup>1</sup>

The Abbot on this occasion had probably gone to France on some embassy, and not for the purpose of attending the General Chapter of his Order at Cîteaux, since Abbots travelling to that assembly were forbidden by the Cistercian statutes to have more than two horses, with one lay brother and one servant.<sup>2</sup>

On the 26th of April 1416, in the fourth year of the reign of Henry V., another letter of safe-conduct is granted to this Abbot; John Forester of Corstorfin, knight; and Walter de Ogilvy, esquire; with forty horsemen, going to England as Commissioners to treat for the ransom of King James I. of Scotland, then held in captivity by the English sovereign.<sup>3</sup> On the 19th of August 1423 a Council held at Inverkeithing appointed, on the death of Henry V., an embassy for the same purpose, consisting of the Earl of March, Chancellor; James Douglas of Balveny; the Abbots of Cambuskenneth and Balmerino, and others.<sup>4</sup> A fac-simile of their Commission, issued

<sup>1</sup> *Rotuli Scotiae*, vol. ii. 189.

<sup>2</sup> *Instit. Gen. Capit.* (A.D. 1134), cap. xlv.

<sup>3</sup> *Rotuli Scotiae*, ii. 217.

<sup>4</sup> *Exchequer Rolls*.



in the name of Murdoch, Governor of Scotland, may be seen in Anderson's *Selectus Diplomatum Scotie*. On the 16th of September of the same year a letter of safe-conduct is granted to them, with fifty-four retainers, going to London in the performance of this embassy.<sup>1</sup> Similar letters are furnished to this Abbot and other persons going to Durham, with a retinue of twenty attendants, on the 13th and 20th of December of the same year.<sup>2</sup> On the 9th of June 1425 a warrant for safe-conduct till Easter following is granted to the Bishops of Aberdeen and Dunblane; the Abbot of Melrose; the Prior of St. Andrews; John, Abbot of Balmurynach; Sir William Hay and other laymen, as ambassadors from the King of Scots, setting out for the Court of Rome with fifty attendants.<sup>3</sup> If the incidents and adventures which this Abbot of Balmerino must have met with on those numerous journeys, and the course of public affairs in which he was engaged, were fully known to us, his history would doubtless be exceedingly interesting.

In the year 1422 we find the same Abbot and other persons chosen as arbiters in a dispute between Sir Andrew Gray, Laird of Fowlis, and Sir John Scrymgeour, Constable of Dundee.<sup>4</sup> In 1424 he was appointed one of the Auditors of the public tax imposed on the whole lands of the kingdom according to their value at the time, as well as on the revenues of Churchmen.<sup>5</sup> This valuation was called the New Extent, and the purpose of the tax was to raise the sum of £30,000 for the liberation of King James I. from his captivity in England.

On the 8th of April 1435 Bishop Wardlaw and the 'Prior and chapter of his Cathedral Church of St. Andrew' enter into a contract or indenture with Abbot John de Haylis and the convent of Balmerino, whereby the latter and their

<sup>1</sup> *Rotuli Scotie*, ii. 237.

<sup>2</sup> *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland: Rotuli Scotie*, ii. 253.

<sup>4</sup> Douglas's *Peerage*.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 244-5.

<sup>5</sup> *Acts of Scot. Parl.*



successors may have in all time coming, freely and without question or demand, a baptismal font or baptistery in the chapel of St. Alus situated within their lands; and may freely administer in that chapel all ecclesiastical sacraments, necessary and voluntary, to their own servants alone, inhabiting the lands in which the chapel is situated; provided that no other parishioners, without leave asked and obtained from their curates, shall be admitted to any sacraments there, and that no prejudice in respect of other parochial matters shall result from this agreement; the Abbot and convent to pay twenty-six pennies of the usual money of Scotland annually as Synod and Cathedral dues from this chapel to the Bishop and his successors. To that part of the indenture which was to remain with the Bishop the common seal of the Abbey was affixed; and to the part which was to remain with the Abbot and convent the common seal of the Prior and chapter of St. Andrews, and the Bishop's seal, were affixed.<sup>1</sup>

This is the first mention of the existence of the chapel of St. Alus, Aile, or Ayle, situated at Balmerino, and probably then recently erected. No other notice of it occurs till near the Reformation. Ordinary chapels of ease were usually situated in remote parts of parishes for the convenience of the people residing there. The sacraments were not administered in them; and those who frequented them had still to attend the parish or Mother church at the chief festivals—Christmas, Easter, Whit-Sunday, and others—because in it alone they could receive the sacraments. But as St. Ayle's chapel was probably situated, as we shall find, at no greater distance from the Abbey church than a few hundred yards; and as the Bishop granted the privilege of administering the sacraments in the chapel, it is evident that this was not an ordinary chapel of ease, and was to be used rather as a substitute for the Abbey church in its character of a *Parish*

<sup>1</sup> *Chartulary*, App. IV. As to the form of a document called an *indenture*, see *ante*, p. 190 *note*.





*church* than as supplementary to it. It is probable that by this time a considerable portion of the Abbey lands in Balmerino parish had ceased to be cultivated by the monks themselves and the lay brothers, and were let to tenants; and that owing to this or other causes these parishioners—who might be described as ‘servants,’ as they were certainly dependants of the convent—had so much increased in number as to render their admission into the Abbey church inconvenient to the monks, for whose daily devotions it was primarily intended. The exclusion of ‘other parishioners’ from the sacraments in St. Ayle’s, unless they had obtained leave from their curates, had probably special reference to the inhabitants of the adjacent portions of the estate of Naughton, who, though still parishioners of Forgan, might, from their greater proximity to St. Ayle’s, prefer to attend it.<sup>1</sup>

It might be supposed that this chapel would be served by one of the monks, since there is no express mention in the existing records of the monastery of any chaplain as specially appointed to officiate in St. Ayle’s. But a priest called ‘Sir Alexander Car, chaplain’ (*capellanus*), appears in the year 1526 as selling a piece of ground in Dundee, from which a *reddendo*

<sup>1</sup> There was a chapel of ease, mentioned as early as the year 1198, at Dundemore (Denmuir) in Abdie parish, where the roofless walls of one of probably much later erection still exist. A dispute between Henry of Dundemore and the Abbot and convent of Lindores (to which the church of Lindores or Abdie belonged) concerning this chapel was settled in a Synod held at Perth by the Bishop of St. Andrews on the 2nd of June 1248; and the terms of the agreement were, that all the parishioners of Abdie residing at Dundemore, excepting Sir Henry and his household, should present themselves three times yearly in the Mother-church of Abdie, namely, at Christmas and Easter, and on St. Andrew’s day (Lindores Abbey being dedicated to St. Andrew), and should there only receive the sacraments; that Sir Henry’s chaplain should pay to the Mother-church of Abdie all the offerings made in his chapel; that he should receive by the hands of the chaplain of Abdie for the time being twenty-five shillings yearly; and that Sir Henry should maintain his chaplain in all necessaries, asking nothing from the Abbot and convent but the yearly stipend of twenty-five shillings and the first equipment of books, vestments, and chalice for the chapel—maintaining the same at his own expense thereafter.—(See Dr. Thomas Dickson’s Summary of the *Register of Lindores Abbey in Proceed. Soc. Antiq. (Scot.)*, vol. xx. p. 157.)



of fifteen shillings annually was to be paid by the purchaser to the Abbot and convent of Balmerino; which indicates that Car was in some way connected with the Abbey—even if only to the extent of holding this ground from it in feu. In 1552, and again in 1555 he signs, as a notary, a document at the Abbey of Balmerino; and in the former of these instances is styled chaplain (*sacellanus*). In 1562 he appears to be living at Balmerino.<sup>1</sup> In none of these cases, however, is he called a monk of the Abbey, nor does he sign any charter as such. But it seems probable that it was of St. Ayle's he was chaplain, and if so, that this chapel was served by a priest who, though subject to the Abbey, was not one of its monks, and acted as vicar or curate of the parish. We shall meet with Car again.

From a charter in Naughton charter-chest (of which the author has been favoured with a perusal) granted in the year 1551 by the Abbot and convent to Thomas Wilson and his spouse, of four oxgates of land in the northern portion of their manor of Balmerino, in which St. Ayle's chapel is mentioned in connection with the boundaries of that land, it might be inferred that the chapel was situated somewhere near the mill-burn at Balmerino. Sixty or seventy years since, there stood, west of that stream, and north of the road leading past the lower end of the mill-dam, a fragment of a building which, according to some, had been a portion of St. Ayle's chapel, though others assert that it had been part of the Nethermill. On the other hand, as Kirkton is mentioned, in the Balmerino Writs, in a charter of 1571 while St. Ayle's was still standing, if that hamlet's name was derived from its proximity to the chapel, rather than from its connection with the Abbey, it would follow that St. Ayle's chapel probably stood near to, or within, the present graveyard. Its precise situation thus remains uncertain.

It is an interesting fact that the convent possessed—as we

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<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. iii. No. 435; *Balmerino Chartulary*, p. 68; *Register of the Kirk-Session of St. Andrews*, p. 146.



have seen—another chapel dedicated to St. Ayle, which was situated at Anstruther. The date of its erection is unknown. The first mention of it which occurs is in the year 1504. Though the above-mentioned agreement between the Bishop of St. Andrews and the convent does not state whether the Chapel of St. Ayle to which it refers was situated at Balmerino or Anstruther, it must be the former place that is meant, as the language used would not have been applicable to the small property possessed by the monks at Anstruther. Moreover, if it was the latter place that was meant, this would no doubt have been expressly stated.

Alban Butler identifies St. Ayle with St. Agilus or Agil, whose 'day' was the 30th of August. He was the son of Agnoald, a courtier of Childebert II., king of Burgundy. By the advice of the celebrated Irish missionary St. Columban (who must not be confounded, as he has sometimes been, with Columba), the parents of Agilus consecrated him to a religious life in the monastery of Luxeuil under its Abbot Eustatius. At the suit of St. Agilus King Thierry put a stop to the persecution raised by Queen Brunehaut against Columban on account of his refusing to women an entrance into his monastery; and his regulation concerning their exclusion was confirmed. Afterwards Agilus and Eustatius were sent by the bishops to preach the Gospel to the heathen beyond Mount Jura. They also penetrated into Bavaria, and their mission was very successful. Sometime after their return, and in the year 636, Agilus was appointed first Abbot of Rebais in the diocese of Meaux, where he died about 650, in the sixty-sixth year of his age.<sup>1</sup> It would have been interesting to know the reasons which led to the dedication of both of the chapels at Balmerino and Anstruther in honour of this continental saint, to whom it does not appear that there was any other dedication in Scotland.

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<sup>1</sup> Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, under 30th August.



In the year 1436 three Cardinals, the Prior of St. Andrews, and the Abbots of Kelso, Melrose, and Balmerino were ordered by the Pope to see to the execution of a Bull for annulling all proceedings against, and restoring to his livings, Croyser, Archdeacon of Teviotdale and Papal Nuncio, who had been by Parliament deprived of his benefices and found guilty of treason. The act which was regarded as so criminal by Parliament, and so meritorious by the Pope, was his having cited to Rome the Bishop of Glasgow to answer for his conduct in promoting, as Chancellor, statutes hostile to Churchmen, and derogatory to the authority of the See of Rome.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Concilia Scotie*, vol. i. p. lxxxiv.





## CHAPTER IX

### ABBOTS RICHARD, JAMES, AND ROBERT

‘Inversion strange ! that unto One who lives  
For self, and struggles with himself alone,  
The amplest share of heavenly favour gives ;  
That to a Monk allots, both in the esteem  
Of God and man, place higher than to him  
Who on the good of others builds his own.’

—WORDSWORTH.

ABBOT RICHARD was in all probability the successor of John de Haylis. On the 8th of May 1441 he witnesses a protestation by the Abbot and convent of Melrose against their appearing in the King's court for the lands of Kinross. In the same year he witnesses a document at Cupar-Fife.<sup>1</sup>

In 1445 Abbot Richard was one of thirty-six persons, of whom six were Bishops and nine were Abbots, deputed by Parliament to hear the claim of the prelates that the Papal Bull might be enforced in Scotland for the abolition of an old Scottish custom whereby the movable goods, or personal estate, of a Bishop lapsed to the Crown at his death, whether he died testate or intestate. The claim of the prelates was granted, and the custom complained of was eventually abolished.<sup>2</sup>

Abbot Richard, in the year 1459, made a treaty at Dundee with the Abbot of Arbroath concerning a piece of ground at Perth, in the Watergate near ‘the Spey,’ their controversy about which they had chosen eight arbiters to settle. The Abbot of Balmerino consented that the ground in question should in all time coming remain in possession of the Abbot

<sup>1</sup> *Liber de Mailros*, p. 565 ; Anderson's *Oliphants in Scotland*, p. xxix.

<sup>2</sup> *Concilia Scotie*, vol. i. p. civ.



of Arbroath and his successors, on condition that they should pay to the monastery of Balmerino fifteen shillings of annual rent. Abbot Richard was accompanied by some of his monks, and with their concurrence he renounced all claim to the ground in dispute. Whereupon the Abbot of Arbroath took instruments by a notary-public in presence of certain witnesses, one of whom was 'brothier John Mussilburgh, Professor in Sacred Theology and Vicar-general of the Preaching Friars,' that is, the Dominicans, or begging Friars of that denomination.<sup>1</sup>

In 1459 King James II., being at Perth, granted to the convent a charter confirming that previously given by King Alexander II.—in the year 1234—which, as we have seen, defined certain boundaries of the Abbey lands in Balmerino parish.<sup>2</sup>

In the year 1464 an arrangement is made by the Abbeys of Balmerino and Arbroath respecting the church of Barry, which, as we have seen, had been the subject of a treaty between these houses upwards of two centuries before. The matter of controversy now is the payment of the ordinary and extraordinary episcopal burdens, and the repairs of the parish church of Barry. The agreement made is to the effect that the monastery of Arbroath shall pay all episcopal burdens due by that church according to the treaty made of old between them; namely, the procurations of the Bishop and archdeacon, the expenses of the archdeacon and dean, the charitable subsidy, and the pension of the chaplain or vicar due by ancient use and wont. Arbroath Abbey shall also, but for this time only, suitably repair the choir of Barry church within and without, at sight of the Bishop of Brechin and the Dean of Angus; and shall pay to Balmerino Abbey twenty shillings annually, which it shall levy from the lands belonging to Arbroath Abbey in the north Ferry of the water of Tay; failing which, from its nearest circumjacent lands; and in future Balmerino Abbey shall uphold the choir

<sup>1</sup> *Registr. de Aberbr.* Pars Altera, p. 109; *Balmerino Chartulary*, App. V.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mug.*, vol. ii. No. 736.



of Barry church in all its requisites, but the above-mentioned burdens must be discharged by the Abbey of Arbroath. The deed of agreement is executed at Dundee in presence of the Bishop of Brechin, 'the magnificent and powerful lord, David, Earl of Crawford, and many other grandes and discreet men';<sup>1</sup> and the seals of both monasteries are affixed to it. It may be explained that before the Reformation the parson, or the possessor of the tithes, had to keep in repair the choir or chancel of a parish church, while the parishioners had to maintain the rest of the fabric. The 'procurations' were 'payments in money made to the Bishop by the rectors of parish churches in place of the entertainment which they had to provide for him when he visited the churches in his diocese in person.'<sup>2</sup> The procurations of the archdeacon were probably of a similar character. The 'charitable subsidy' was a tax which a bishop might levy from all the clergy of his diocese in a time of great distress.

Abbot Richard was still in office in 1465.

ABBOT JAMES seems to have been the successor of Richard.<sup>3</sup> His term of office was long, as his name occurs in documents ranging from 1466 to 1507. He was appointed, or at least had his appointment confirmed, by Bulls of Pope Paul II. on the 5th of March 1466. On the 18th of July of the same year Alexander Rate, canon of Elgin cathedral, acting as procurator for Abbot James, made an offering (*obtulit*) or payment of 200 gold florins to the Papal treasury. This sum seems to have constituted the *commune servitium* which, according to Brady, was the payment to the See of Rome of 'the fruits of the first year, or of a certain sum of money fixed by the

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. de Aberbr.* Pars Altera, p. 133; *Balmerino Chartulary*, App. VI.; *Concilia Scotiæ*, i. p. clxxxviii.

<sup>2</sup> See Rodgers's *Rental Book of Cupar Abbey*, vol. i. p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> James is the fourth Abbot whose name I have been enabled to add to the list of those known to the Editor of the Chartulary, the other three being Abbots Thomas, Alan II., and Patrick.



Apostolic Chamber, and which was to be paid by those prelates who, by the votes of the Cardinals, obtained bishoprics or abbeys.<sup>1</sup> This, the *annat*, as it was called, or first year's income, paid by Bishops and Abbots, if not by every priest on his presentation to a benefice, was one of the chief sources of the Papal revenue. After the Reformation the first year's fruits were paid (in Scotland) to the Crown.

The office of Abbot's Bailie, embracing the civil and criminal jurisdiction, or *regality*, which belonged to the Abbot as temporal lord of the Abbey lands, was, as has been already stated, usually bestowed on some lay proprietor in the neighbourhood. It was an office of considerable importance on account both of the nature of its duties and of the emoluments attached to it, and was given only to those who were staunch friends of the Church. The Abbey lands of Balmerino, Pitgorno, and Barry had been constituted—at what period does not appear—three distinct baronies; and, in the absence of information to the contrary, it might be presumed that an Abbot's Bailie would be appointed to each of them. There is, however, no mention of such an official connected with Pitgorno, though baronial courts were held there as well as at Balmerino and Barry.

The names of the Bailies of the barony of Balmerino before the Reformation are not certainly known; but on the 5th of December 1599 a Crown charter was granted to John Kinneir younger, of that Ilk, by which, 'because he and his predecessors had been for these many years Bailies to the Abbots of Balmerino of all the lands, baronies, fishings, and other things whatsoever belonging to its Commendator,' the King constituted him and his heirs-male hereditary Bailies of these lands and baronies, and ordained that all sasines of the lands be given by the said Bailie and his deputies; and that the clerks to be chosen by him, and no others, be notaries for these sasines; and

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<sup>1</sup> W. Maziere Brady's *Episcopal Succession in England, Scotland, and Ireland, A.D. 1400 to 1875; with appointments to Monasteries, &c.*, Rome, 1876; vol. i. p. 167, *Balmerinock*; also *Preface*, pp. xvi, xviii.





the King confirmed all the emoluments both of the spirituality and temporality<sup>1</sup> of the monastery formerly granted for the exercise of the said office, and gave the same anew to John Kinneir, reserving the office of Bailyary of the barony of Barry disposed to Sir James Elphinstoun of Barnetoun, the King's secretary.<sup>2</sup> It appears probable that the Kinneirs of Kinneir, who had been so generous benefactors of the Abbey, were originally appointed hereditary Bailies of all the three baronies; and if so, that Pitgorno as well as Balmerino still remained under their jurisdiction after Barry had been constituted a separate Bailyary. The latter event took place on the 14th of May 1506, when Abbot James and the convent granted a charter of the Bailyary of that barony, during their pleasure, to Sir Thomas Maule of Pannure.

This charter illustrates the nature of the duties discharged by an Abbot's Bailie. It empowers Maule to hold, in name of the Abbot and convent, justiciary courts for the barony when and where, within its bounds, he might think necessary and expedient; to appoint officers under him; to cause suits to be called; to administer justice to complainers; to punish transgressors and absentees from his courts; to levy fines and escheats, and apply them to the use of the monastery; to prosecute and defend its rights and privileges; to repledge and bring back to the liberty of the barony its men and their goods and chattels from before any judge by whom, or from any place in which, they might be arrested; to decline to submit to such judges, their courts, or officers, and to protest for the right of the convent; and to do all things known to belong to the office of Bailie; and the Abbot and convent were to hold as ratified and approved whatsoever their Bailie might choose to do in their name with respect to the foresaid

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<sup>1</sup> The *temporality* denoted the Church lands and other civil rights and possessions; the *spirituality* included tithes, manses, and glebes.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. vi. No. 981; and also the MS. copy of the same in Gen. Reg. House.



things, 'under hypothec and obligation of all the goods past, present, and future of the monastery.'<sup>1</sup> From a charter of the barony of Barry granted to Sir James Elphinstoun in the year 1600 we learn that there was a 'Courthill' there—doubtless the remarkable artificial tumulus or barrow at Grange of Barry—on which the Bailie's courts were held, and sasine given of the lands that werè feued out.<sup>2</sup>

On the 28th of January 1506–7 Abbot James and the convent grant a feu-charter of the lands of the 'town' of Pitgorno to Hugh Moncreif, the King's 'familiar' or servant, and his spouse Jonet Uchiltre and their heirs, in return for the assistance they have received from him against John Evyot of Balhousy concerning their fishings on the Tay, and towards the augmentation of the rents of the monastery. The nature of the 'cause' against Evyot is not stated.<sup>3</sup> No later notice of Abbot James occurs.

ABBOT ROBERT FOSTER or FORESTER was the last Superior of the monastery.<sup>4</sup> His term of office was of greater length than even that of his predecessor. His name appears in various documents from 1511 to 1559. He must have been appointed at an age comparatively early for an Abbot, which he would probably not have been if elected by the convent; but, as we shall see, monks had previous to this period been deprived of the privilege of electing their Superior. Before we relate the important events of Abbot Robert's time we must glance at certain matters belonging to the preceding century which have not yet been noticed.

In the course of our narrative several particulars have been mentioned in regard to which the monks of Balmerino did not

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. de Panmure*, vol. ii. p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. vi. No. 1049. A spot called *Courthill* at the Priory of Pluscardin was used for the same purpose.

<sup>3</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. ii. No. 3081.

<sup>4</sup> His surname *Foster* is found in the *Reg. de Panmure*, vol. i. p. xxx. Its correct form was *Forester*.



strictly adhere to the original rules of the Cistercians. In relaxing the severity of these rules, however, they did but follow the example of other communities of their Order. In the year 1475 Pope Sixtus IV. granted to the Superiors of Cistercian monasteries power to dispense with the obligation to abstain from flesh meat. But there is reason to believe that he thus only gave formal sanction to what had already been the practice in those houses. During the fifteenth century, indeed, the bonds of discipline appear to have become more and more loose among monks of every class in regard to 'weightier matters' than abstinence from animal food. As early as at some period between 1401 and 1445 the Abbot of Pontigny was sent to Scotland by the heads of the Cistercian Order to restore religion then sunk to a low condition.<sup>1</sup> In the year 1424 King James I. addressed a letter to the Abbots and Priors of the Augustinian and Benedictine monasteries of Scotland, in which he informed them that the daily increasing corruption of the cloistral life during his reign compelled him to endeavour to rouse them from their torpor and sloth, so that the ruin which threatened their houses might be averted; and he earnestly exhorted them to adopt without delay suitable measures for the restoration of discipline and the revival of pristine fervour of devotion, lest the munificence of Kings in providing them with rich endowments and splendid edifices should now be regretted, in view of the decay of religion in their monasteries.<sup>2</sup>

This letter proves that gross irregularities in conventual life were already prevalent in Scottish monasteries, as they were also throughout Europe. In the fifteenth century 'the renunciation of property, abstinence and simplicity in food and clothing, and other artificial virtues, strictly enjoined by the monastic rules, were rarely practised. Not only the Abbots and other Superiors kept luxurious tables, dwelt in

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<sup>1</sup> Stuart's *Records of Kinloss*, p. xl.

<sup>2</sup> *Concilia Scotiæ*, vol. i. p. lxxxix.



magnificent halls, wore costly garments, and were attended by youths of good families as pages, in rich liveries; but the private monks also spurned the sober fare, homely garb, and devout retirement of their predecessors. They kept horses, and upon various pretences were continually going about in public; they lived separately, upon portions allowed them out of the common stock; they bought their own clothes, which were of the finest materials that could be procured; and the common dormitory in which they slept was now partitioned off into separate chambers.<sup>1</sup> Various attempts were made by the General Chapter at Cîteaux to correct in Cistercian monasteries such abuses—which were far from being the worst that were ascribed to the monks—and towards the end of the same century it commissioned the Abbot of the Cistercian monastery of Cupar-Angus to visit and reform every house of the Order in Scotland; when he deposed the Abbots of Melrose, Dundrennan, and Sweet-Heart or New Abbey—presumably on account of their infractions of discipline.<sup>2</sup> On the death of the Abbot of Dunfermline in the year 1474 the monks of that house chose one of their own number to succeed him; but King James III. set aside the election, and promoted to the vacant office the Abbot of Paisley. He also appointed the new Abbot of Paisley, and from that time the monks of other monasteries also were deprived of the privilege of choosing their Superiors; the King either taking to himself both their nomination and election, and then getting the Pope to confirm the appointment, or inducing the Pope to require the monks to elect the person whom the King recommended. A still greater abuse was the granting of Abbaties *in commendam*, or in trust, to favourites of the Court—bishops, secular priests, or laymen—who had not taken the monastic vows, and did not even reside in the monastery. In such cases the discipline of the convent was administered by the Prior, who was

<sup>1</sup> Morton's *Monastic Annals of Teviotdale*, p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> *Harleian MS.* 2363, Section 6 (British Museum).





appointed by the Commendator. The latter personage enjoyed a third of the revenues of the Abbacy, while the remainder was devoted to the maintenance of the monks. It does not appear, however, that there was any Commendator of Balmerino previous to the Reformation.

The Commission of the Bailiary of Barry granted to Sir Thomas Maule in the year 1506 was several times renewed by Abbot Robert and the convent to the same person and his son Robert. Thus Sir Thomas obtains a charter of the Bailiary on the 10th of February 1511, which is signed by Abbot Robert and eight monks. On the 19th of June in the same year the grant is extended to nineteen years' duration. Again, on the 10th of February 1554, Robert Maule of Panmure obtains the Bailiary for three years, and afterwards again for five years; and on the 3rd of October 1558 the office is conferred on himself during his life, and on his heirs after him 'for the term of three nineteen years.'<sup>1</sup>

The contract of the marriage of Thomas, eldest son of Robert Maule of Panmure, with Elisabeth Lindsay, daughter of the Earl of Crawford, is still extant, dated at Balmerino, 8th January 1526, and subscribed by 'David, Erl of Craufurd' and 'R. Maill (Maule) with my hand on the pen.' The latter 'wos ane man that had beine brought vpe rudlie vithout letters, so that he could nather red nor vreit.'<sup>2</sup>

In 1532 Abbot Robert was a member of a Royal Commission, chiefly composed of dignified Churchmen, appointed to visit and consider the privileges of the Universities of St. Andrews, Glasgow, and Aberdeen. In the Report which they gave in they stated that they found the Regents and students to be free from all taxation, and recommended the King to confirm this privilege.<sup>3</sup>

The increasing corruptions in the Church were now calling

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. de Panmure*, vol. i. pp. 279, 280, 309.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii. pp. 302, 309.

<sup>3</sup> *St. Andrews University Commissioners' Report*, 1837, p. 181.



loudly for reformation. But most of all had the monks departed from their original strictness and purity of life. The literature of the period, and even the statutes of Church Councils, furnish too plentiful evidence of the truth of this statement, which has been questioned by some modern writers. The monks of Balmerino were reputed to be no better than others, and are subjected to ridicule by Sir David Lindsay in his *Satire of the Three Estates*, which is said to have been acted at Cupar-Fife in the year 1535.

In 1533 the General Chapter of Cîteaux again attempted to restore the discipline of the Cistercian monasteries; and commissioned the Abbot of Karoli-locus (Karlstadt?) to visit and reform those of Scotland. The object chiefly aimed at both by the General Chapter and their Commissioner was not, as might have been expected, the correction of the graver offences alleged against the monks, but only the discontinuance of their possession of private property, which was a violation of the monastic principle of having all things in common. The monks, especially those of Melrose, Newbotle, and Balmerino, had assigned to them at that period, and, as they asserted, for a hundred years previously, separate portions and pensions for their food and clothing, and also separate gardens for their private use. The Commissioner, therefore, in his Visitation Roll, ordered the abolition of these indulgences. His injunctions having been disregarded, the Abbots of Cupar-Angus and Glenluce, who had been specially deputed as Commissioners by the General Chapter, addressed a letter, dated at Edinburgh the 1st of October 1534, to the Abbot of Melrose, in which they informed him that they had learned in the course of their visitations, as well as from meetings of Abbots and of many of their monks, that the reformation of the Order in this kingdom, especially in regard to 'the vice of private property,' had been impeded chiefly by him; that though during the previous year he and the wiser members of his house had accepted the Visitation Roll of the previous



Commissioner, yet in violation of its tenor, he still permitted his monks to have their separate portions, pensions, and gardens; that his monks had asserted before the Commissioners, and in his own presence, that they had nothing but what their Abbot had given and permitted them to have; and that the monks of other Cistercian houses had declared that they would voluntarily carry out the required reform when the convent of Melrose, the parent monastery of the Order in Scotland, had shown an example. The Commissioners therefore commanded him, on pain of deposition from his Abbatial office, to comply forthwith with all the injunctions contained in the Visitation Roll, and cause them to be executed. If his monks should refuse or delay to obey him in regard to any of its articles, they ordered him, having previously admonished them, to excommunicate them within twenty days; and when his own monastery had been reformed, to compel by ecclesiastical censures, if necessary, the other convents—that of Balmerino being one—which were subject to him as their Father Abbot, to live according to the Rule, and to make a similar reformation. If he should disobey these injunctions, at least in regard to the reform of his own monastery, they cited him to appear personally at Cîteaux on the second day of the next General Chapter, with intimation that, whether he appeared or not, proceedings would be instituted against him.

The monks of the three monasteries mentioned had petitioned the Commissioners for exemption from the required reforms, so far as that they might be allowed to retain their private gardens; to distribute in any way they pleased what might be left of their portions; and to receive each a sum of money, for the purchase of clothing and other necessities, from a treasurer to be chosen by the convent and removable by them; and they promised that if these requests were granted, they would accept the Visitation Roll, and obey it to the best of their power.



To this petition from Melrose, Newbotle, and Balmerino the Commissioners replied, that the three indulgences asked were so repugnant to the indispensable vow of poverty taken by monks as to render it improbable that the General Chapter would dispense with their prohibition. Nevertheless, being desirous of bringing these monasteries to some commencement of reform, they granted a mitigation of the prohibition to the following extent—till another settlement of the question should be made by the General Chapter. 1. That the monks might have their gardens, but as common property, in such a way that no one should have a greater right in any of them than another; also that a passage must be opened from garden to garden, and the fruits and produce of all of them be applied to the use of the convent. 2. That the remains of their portions must be distributed to boys or servants outside of the cloister by one only of the convent whom they should choose; and that no monk should keep more than one servant,<sup>1</sup> who was to frequent the cloister but as rarely as possible, and never without the knowledge of the Superior. 3. That they should receive money, for the purchase of necessities only, from a treasurer of the convent to be chosen by them, until a stock of clothes, both white and black, with tunics, cloaks (cowls?), shoes, cinctures, and other garments and necessary things should be procured by the Abbots or other officers of the convents, in order to be kept by a *Vestiary* instituted by the monks, and should be supplied to them without delay. The Commissioners ordered each of the Abbots of the three monasteries, under pain of excommunication, within three days after their return to their respective houses, to explain all the foregoing conditions to their convents assembled in chapter, and cause

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<sup>1</sup> 'Nemo fratrum ultra unum servitorem retineat.' Both Fosbroke (*British Monachism*, ch. lvii.) and Morton (*Monastic Annals of Tervotdale*, p. 241) have misread these words in the original MS.; the former making them *ultra annum servitorem*, 'should not keep a servant more than a year'; and the latter, *ultra unam portionem*, 'double portions were forbidden.'





them to be understood; and to accept and preserve the Roll of reform or visitation as above relaxed, and obey it in all points. If the several convents should within three days give full obedience, they ordered the Abbot of Melrose, before next Pentecost, under pain of excommunication, to expend in the purchase of necessities for the monks 200 merks; the Abbot of Newbotle £100; and the Abbot of Balmerino 100 merks, Scots money.

In reply to this answer of the Commissioners, the monks—probably by delegates from the three monasteries—prepared at Edinburgh a memorial which they addressed to some consultative body (*Reverendi Domini consultatores*) who may have been Abbots acting as assessors to the Commissioners. In this document they set forth many specious reasons against the abolition of their indulgences—such as, that Scotland is less fertile, and has less abundance of wine, oil, grain, nuts, and other requisites of monastic life than France and other countries; that their predecessors, men more holy and learned in the statutes of the Order than they, had from beyond the memory of man lived as they themselves now did; and that to suppose that those men were thus living in a state of condemnation was offensive to all faithful Christians. They could not be truly said to possess private property when they had nothing without their Abbot's permission for the procuring of necessities. For these and similar reasons they were not bound to comply with the demand for a pretended reformation; and they requested that further proceedings might be delayed till a General Chapter could be assembled. These arguments of the monks were rejected by the body to whom they were addressed; but whether any, or what result was effected by the Visitors does not appear.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1536 an annual tax on Prelates was granted by a Provincial Council of the Scottish Church for the mainten-

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<sup>1</sup> *Harleian MS.* 2363, No. 3, foll. 3-8, 10-17.



ance of the College of Justice, or Court of Session, then recently established. The tax amounted to £1425, 18s. Of this sum £11, 4s. was to be contributed by the Abbot of Balmerino.<sup>1</sup>

Balmerino has always been celebrated for the salubrity of its climate, and an incident of the period at which we have now arrived proves that the reputation which it bore in this respect in Queen Ermengarde's time was still maintained. The incident referred to was the selection of the Abbey as a place of sojourn for the restoration of the health of another Queen. In 1536 King James V., having proceeded to France with the intention of finding a consort in that kingdom, was introduced to the Princess Magdalen, eldest daughter of the French monarch. This lady, however, was in so delicate a state of health as to require to be carried in a chariot, being unable to ride on horse-back like the other ladies of the Court. 'Yitt,' says Lindsay of Pitscottie, 'fra [the] tyme shoe saw the king of Scotland, and spak with him, shoe became so enamoured with him, and loved him so weill, that shoe wold have no man alive to hir husband bot he allanerlie.'<sup>2</sup> Her affection was reciprocated by the Scottish monarch. Lesley says, she 'wes ane young ladie of pleasand bewtie, guidlie favour, luffing countenance, and cumly manners, above all uthers within the realme of Fraunce.'<sup>3</sup> Her health rallied about this time, and though sage counsellors disapproved of the union, it was at length assented to by her father; and the marriage was celebrated in Paris on the 1st of January 1536-7, amid great rejoicings. After remaining for a considerable time at the French Court to witness the fêtes which were got up on their account, King James and his bride set sail for Scotland, and landed at Leith on the 28th of May, with a convoy of many French and Scottish ships. 'And when the queine,' says Pitscottie, 'was

<sup>1</sup> *Concilie Scotiæ*, vol. i. p. cxxxvi; *Misc. of the Bannatyne Club*, vol. ii. pp. 51-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Chron. Scot.*, p. 367.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. Scot.*, p. 152 (Bann. Club Ed.).



cum vpoun Scottis eard, shoe bowed hir down to the same, and kissed the mould thair of, and thanked God that hir husband and shoe was cum saiff throw the seas.<sup>1</sup> She was received with the reverence and love of the whole people as she passed with the King to the Abbey of Holyrood; and great preparations were made in Edinburgh and other chief towns to celebrate her arrival. But the universal joy was soon to be quenched in grief.

‘After the first pleasurable excitement,’ says Miss Strickland, ‘caused by the flattering nature of her reception in Scotland was over, the young Queen began to flag. She could not conceal, either from herself or others, that she was ill at ease. The spring was cold and ungenial, and Edinburgh is about the worst place, on account of the prevalence of east wind and fogs in such seasons, to which a delicate invalid, with a hereditary tendency to consumption, could be brought from a milder climate. Neither of the palaces there were desirable residences for her. Holyrood was as much too damp and low as the Castle, on its lofty rock, was high and bleak. King James saw the expediency of removing her without delay. Being very anxious about her, he made his physicians hold a consultation, in order to select the most salubrious place in his dominions for her particular case. We should have thought they would have recommended the soft air of Rothesay, or the vale of Glasgow; but they decided on a bracing temperature, as appears by the following quaint notice in Martine’s History of the See of St. Andrews: “[It is reported that] being a tender lady, the physicians choosed this place (St. Andrews) and the Abbacie of Balmerinloch, as having the best aers of any places in the kingdom, for her residence and abode.”

‘To Balmerino, therefore, or the Sailors’ Town, as its Celtic name signifies, a picturesque village on the Firth of Tay, Queen Magdalen was removed. She was lodged in the

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<sup>1</sup> *Chron. Scot.*, p. 373.



beautiful Abbey which had been founded by her royal predecessor Queen Ermengarde, the consort of William the Lion, out of gratitude for her restoration to health, in consequence of a temporary residence on that spot. The ruins of the Abbey are still to be seen, situated on a gentle eminence above the bold rocky shores of the river Tay. Magdalen derived immediate benefit from the change of air; and perhaps if she could have been content to remain quietly there for a few weeks or months, equally good effects might have resulted to her as had formerly been the case with Queen Ermengarde. But as King James could not be with her in this monastic house, her desire of his society induced her to return to Holyrood, where she could enjoy his company.' A letter sent to Queen Magdalen's father, dated the 8th of June 1537, which, Miss Strickland thinks, must have been written after her return from Balmerino, proves that she regarded herself as convalescent, and was hoping for a cure; yet her end was near.<sup>1</sup>

Though Martine's book was not written till nearly a century and a half after Queen Magdalen came to Scotland, and though the statement which Miss Strickland quotes from it is given by him only as a report, yet as he had abundant sources of information, there appears to be no reason for doubting its truth. We may therefore well believe that St. Andrews and Balmerino Abbey were, on account of their bracing climate, chosen or recommended by Magdalen's physicians for her temporary residence. Yet it is not quite certain that she ever came to either of these places. Miss Strickland does not quote what Martine adds, in reference to the *Novum Hospitium*, or 'New Inns,' intended to be her domicile at St. Andrews—'Yea the tradition also goes, that for the queen's reception and accommodation here, so many artificers were convened and employed, and the materials so

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<sup>1</sup> *Lives of the Queens of Scotland*, i. 322.





quicklie prepared, that the house was begun and finished in a month. But in all appearance she never came to it; for after her arrival [in Scotland] she first dwelt, and within a short time died, at Halyrood house.<sup>1</sup> Her death took place forty-nine days, according to the most trustworthy accounts, after she landed at Leith. As regards Balmerino, Miss Strickland does not quote any authority showing that the intended visit to it was actually made; nor do contemporary writers mention it. Nevertheless she may have had good ground for her statements; for we can hardly admit the alternative, that the circumstantial account which this accomplished historian gives of the Queen's sojourn at the Abbey is but the product of a lively imagination. If Magdalen did not come to St. Andrews, to occupy a domicile so hurriedly erected that its walls must have been damp and unhealthy, this would render her visit to Balmerino all the more probable. When a young girl, Magdalen had declared her wish to be a Queen, whatever her realm might be. She gained her wish for a brief period, though she was never crowned. All classes lamented her untimely death, for she had not quite completed the seventeenth year of her age. Out of respect for her memory mourning dress was worn; and this, in the opinion of George Buchanan, was the first instance of its use by the Scots, which after forty years, he tells us, was not very common, though public manners were ever growing worse and worse! (Bellenden, however, informs us that on the death of William the Lion, the King's servants were clothed 'in dule weid' all the year following.)<sup>2</sup> It is believed that Queen Magdalen regarded with favour the doctrines of the Reformers; and if she had been spared to her husband and the country, the history of the Scottish Reformation might have borne a different character from that which the actual events assumed

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<sup>1</sup> *Reliquie Divi Andree*, p. 190.

<sup>2</sup> *Buchanan's Works*, ed. Ruddiman, vol. i. p. 276; Bellenden's *Hist. and Chron. of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 333.



under Mary of Lorraine. Her death was the occasion of Sir David Lindsay's poem, *The Deploratione of the Deith of Quene Magdalene*, which, however, is a mixture of fact and fable. Buchanan wrote a Latin epitaph upon her, of which Miss Strickland gives a metrical translation.

King James V. paid a visit to Balmerino Abbey in 1539, as appears from a charter which he granted there on the 6th of July in that year.<sup>1</sup> He seems to have been then living in St. Andrews, where his second consort, Mary of Lorraine, had borne to him a son a few weeks previous to this visit. There is a tradition that the same monarch, being on one occasion at the Abbey, was walking on the road leading from Balmerino to Byres, and conversing with an old woman who lived in the neighbourhood, but did not know who he was; and that as one after another of his servants or courtiers, meeting their royal master, did reverence to him, the woman in astonishment at length exclaimed, 'They could not make more ado if you were the King himself!'

In March 1546 a 'General Provincial Council' of the Scottish Church, which met at St. Andrews on the summons of Cardinal Beaton, imposed on the clergy a tax of £2500 for the expenses of deputies from Scotland to the famous Council of Trent then sitting. The tax was levied, and Balmerino Abbey would have to pay the sum apportioned to it; but no Scottish delegate appears to have attended the Council, on account of the dangers which now threatened the Church in Scotland.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The charter referred to was in the possession of the late David Hunter, Esq., of Blackness, Dundee, who communicated to the Author the fact and date mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> *Concilia Scotie*, vol. i. cxlv.



## CHAPTER X

### ABBOT ROBERT : DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERY

‘Threats come which no submission may assuage,  
No sacrifice avert, no power dispute ;  
The tapers shall be quenched, the belfries mute,  
And, ’mid their choirs unroofed by selfish rage,  
The warbling wren shall find a leafy cage ;  
The gadding bramble hang her purple fruit.’

—WORDSWORTH.

HAVING traced the history of the Abbey thus far, I have now to relate the events which brought about its suppression.

The first of these was an attack made on it by ‘our auld enemies of England,’ as our southern neighbours were then commonly described. During the childhood of Mary Queen of Scots determined efforts were made by Henry VIII. of England to bring about a marriage—to be accomplished in due time—between her and his own son, afterwards Edward VI., while the French King and Mary’s mother were equally desirous of her union with the Dauphin. Ere Mary was a year old, the Regent Arran by formal treaty agreed to Henry’s demands, but several causes, which may all be summed up in the fixed aversion of the nation to an English match, prevented the fulfilment of the treaty. The result was, that the English monarch ravaged by fire and sword the southern counties; but he failed even thus to induce the Scots to consent to his purpose. Another object of these atrocities was, strange to say, the propagation of the Reformed doctrines, which had now taken root in both countries. Henry had recently suppressed the monasteries of England—the lesser ones in 1536, and the greater in 1539—and when his generals crossed



the Border, the surest way they could take to gratify his hostility, alike to the independence of the Scots and to the Church of Rome, was to despoil the abodes of the monks, which had generally been respected in time of war. The Earl of Hertford, who invaded Scotland in 1544, and again in 1545, not only burnt and sacked Edinburgh and Leith; as well as a vast number of villages, towns, and castles; and many collegiate and parish churches, Friars' houses and Hospitals in Lothian, the Merse, and Teviotdale; but also gave to the flames the great Abbeys of Melrose, Dryburgh, Jedburgh and Kelso; and even this amount of havoc came short of his royal master's desires. The ruins of the last-mentioned magnificent structures are commonly but erroneously associated in the popular mind with the violence of the Scottish Reformers alone.

After the death of Henry VIII. the same policy was continued by the Protector Somerset, who in 1547 marched into Scotland at the head of a powerful army, and on the 10th of September defeated the Scots in the great battle of Pinkie. Meanwhile an English fleet commanded by Lord Clinton had been advancing along the east coast, and after effecting a settlement of troops in the island of Inchcolm entered the Tay, and towards the end of September landed a force at the Castle of 'Broughty Craig.' When a few shots had been fired, the castle was treasonably surrendered by its keepers, and Sir Andrew Dudley was appointed its captain. From the letters of Lord Clinton, Dudley, and others—written about this time to Somerset—it appears that there were on both sides of the Tay those who favoured the English interest and the reformation of the Church. Dudley reports that he has 'overtures from divers gentlemen that fear the Word of God'; that there is 'much desire in Angus and Fife to have a good preacher, and Bibles and Testaments and other good English books of Tyndale and Frith's translation'; and that Balfour 'the Laird of Monquhany has offered to deliver up





St. Andrews.' From Broughty Castle the English ravaged the surrounding country, and both by land and from the Tay proceeded to attack Dundee. That town was twice bombarded and occupied, and as often evacuated by them; and Broughty Castle was twice unsuccessfully besieged by the Scots under the Earl of Argyll. Wyndham, the English admiral, who had executed the bombardment of Dundee with the guns of his ships, when reporting on the 18th of December his movements to Somerset and requesting reinforcements, promises that he 'will not leave one town, nor village, nor fisher boat unburned from Fifeness to Combe's Inch' (Inchcolm); and he 'trusts soon to suppress an Abbey or two.' A week later he proceeds to carry out the latter purpose; and Balmerino Abbey being the nearest, an expedition is organised against it.<sup>1</sup>

Choosing for the time of his assault the night of Christmas, on which he probably judged that the monks would be fast asleep after that season's festivities, Admiral Wyndham sailed up the Tay, and landed near the Abbey a force of three hundred men, of whom fifty appear to have been harquebusiers. The monks, aware doubtless of the fate so recently experienced by the Border monasteries, had made preparations against an attack from the English fleet, and had provided for the defence of the Abbey a supply of 'harquebuses of croke.'<sup>2</sup> With these pieces they opened fire on the enemy. Some horsemen also were brought out—doubtless tenants or

<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of State Papers relating to Scotland from 1509 to 1603*, vol. i. pp. xii, xiii, and 66–73.

<sup>2</sup> The *harquebus*, *arquebus*, or *hackbut*, was an old species of gun, whose stock had a trigger arrangement like a crossbow. It had originally the butt in a right line with the barrel, and, being fired from the chest, was not well fitted for taking aim with, as the eye could not be brought near enough to the barrel. This defect was remedied by giving the butt a hooked form, whence, according to some, it was called *harquebus à croc*, or *harquebus of croke*, that is, a 'gun with a hook.' According to others, the *hackbut of croke* was so named from its being furnished with a hook for fixing on a rest and keeping the weapon in its place.—(See *Notes and Queries*, 7th series, vol. iii. p. 514; iv. pp. 96, 233.)



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feuars of the Abbey lands—who must have been placed there in readiness for such an emergency. The skirmish was disastrous to the defenders. Four of the horsemen were killed, and the Abbey, ‘with all things that were in it,’ was given to the flames. Elated by their success, the English proceeded to burn the neighbouring villages, and finished their night’s work by setting fire to the stacks of corn which at that season of the year they would find in the enclosures of the tenants of the Abbey, and probably also within the precincts of the Grange on the north side of the cloister. The Admiral himself appears to have been surprised that a place which he describes as ‘very strong’ was so easily taken; which is perhaps to be explained by the supposition, that though the monks had previously prepared for an attack, they were off their guard when it was actually made.

There was at least one stout defender of the Abbey whose exertions were not unrewarded. In 1554 the Abbot and convent confirmed to Henry Bane and Alisone Petillock his wife, by feu-charter, seven acres of Cultra, with pasture for five cows and two horses or mares with their followers on the lands of New Grange and Corby, ‘for services in defence of the Monastery against invaders in those tempestuous days of the Lutherans.’<sup>1</sup>

This *Battle of Balmerino*—if such it may be called—must have made a deep impression on the minds of the parishioners of all classes; and tradition might have been expected to keep alive the remembrance of it. But the event, not having been noticed by any historian of the period, and having apparently been overlaid in the popular recollection by another attack made, as we shall see, twelve years after this by the Reformers, had become utterly unknown—a lost chapter in the annals of the Parish—till it was brought to light by a brief notice of it in the Calendar of State Papers already

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<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. v. No. 1338.



quoted, and published in 1858. The original document which contains the account of the burning of the Abbey is preserved in the State Paper Office, London, being a despatch from Admiral Wyndham to Lord Grey describing his operations for the defence of Dundee, and requesting fresh munition and instructions. It is dated from the river Tay two days after the attack. The portion of it which relates this disaster will be found in the Appendix,<sup>1</sup> and was printed for the first time in the previous edition of the present work.

It is somewhat surprising that Lindores Abbey appears to have escaped a hostile visit from Admiral Wyndham. Four years previously, however, as reported by Sir Ralph Sadler, the English ambassador, to Henry VIII., 'the work' of despoiling monasteries 'began at Dundee by destroying the houses both of the Black and Grey Friars,' and 'afterwards the Abbey of Lindores was sacked by a company of good Christians, as they were called, who turned the monks out of doors'; and Wyndham may have judged it needless to attack it so soon again.<sup>2</sup> But he 'burned a nunnery within two miles of St. Johnstoun's'—that of Elcho, a Cistercian house near Perth—and 'brought away all the nuns and many gentlemen's daughters.' Before the English evacuated Dundee they set fire to the town, and partially destroyed its churches, especially that of St. Mary. While they held possession of Broughty Castle they made several hostile incursions into Fife, and burnt Scotsraig. Lindsay of Pitscottie states that the presence of the English ships in the Tay caused the barons and gentlemen of Fife to watch nightly for the safety of their goods and gear, especially when any ships arrived in the Firth, and that at length certain Scotsmen confederated with the English to land and burn the 'East Ferry' and the district around, when a number of Fife gentlemen, with the Provost and citizens of St. Andrews, having got knowledge of their intention, came in the early morning and concealed themselves till the English

<sup>1</sup> No. viii.

<sup>2</sup> Hill Burton's *Hist. Scot.*, vol. iii. p. 250 (ed. 1873).





had landed at Portincraig. They then passed between them and their ships, and slew eight score of their best soldiers and sailors, which was a great loss to them in the guiding of their ships. 'But fra that time' (Pitcottie dryly adds) 'they desired not to land in Fife.'<sup>1</sup> The English did not finally surrender Broughty Castle and the strong fort they had erected on Balgillo Hill till February 1549-50.

The precise amount of injury done to the buildings of Balmerino Abbey during the attack above described cannot now be determined. But as the event occurred during night, it may be presumed that no stone walls were demolished. The conflagration probably consumed the wood-work that was easily accessible. It must also have destroyed numerous treasures of art, and manuscripts accumulated, doubtless, in the Abbey during the previous three centuries, the loss of which must excite our keen regret; and the lament of the Prophet would recur to the monks as well as to other parishioners—'Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised Thee, is burned up with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste.' The injury done to the monastery could only have been partially repaired between this period and the Reformation. Before we reach that event, however, several other matters require to be noticed.

In consequence of the burning of Dundee by the English, certain rents drawn from that town by the convent of Balmerino, as well as by other parties, were subjected to deduction, probably in virtue of an old Act of Parliament giving partial relief to tenants of 'brunt lands in burghs.' In proceedings in the Burgh Court of Dundee in 1554 "Dane John Bonar" (monks being called *Dean* as an honorary title<sup>2</sup>) "for the Abbot and

<sup>1</sup> *Chronicle of Scotland*, p. 505.

<sup>2</sup> 'All monkrye, ye may heir and se,  
Ar callit Denis, for dignitie;  
Quhowbeit his mother mylk the kow,  
He mon be callit Dene Androw,  
Dene Peter, Dene Paull, and Dene Robart.'

—(Sir David Lindsay's *Experience and Ane Courtier*).



Convent of Balmerinock, grantit him payit of all annuals awing of Sanct Mark's tenement in the Flukergait (the old name of the Nethergate), and to require nae mair in all time to come but twelve shillings yearly." Legal action had, however, to be taken for the recovery of part of the rents. Sir James Young refused to pay an annual from the land of his Chaplainry (of St. Colm's altar in St. Mary's church), but the factor for the Abbey "producit in judgment ane charter purporting that Sanct Colm's land in the Flukergait is awing to the Abbot and convent thirty pence yearly, whilk wes admittit be the Bailies ane sufficient probation." Maister James Scrymgeour likewise refused to pay "ane annual-rent—now defalkit to eight shillings sixpence because the land wes brunt—awing to the Abbot and convent of Balmerinock be the space of twa years," and this having been proved to the Bailies, they ordained "officers to pass and distrenze the readiest guidis and gear being upon the land"; on which "Maister James, present in judgment, confessit and consentit to the giving thereof."<sup>1</sup>

It appears to have been a practice of long continuance to send from each of the Scottish monasteries one or more of its inmates to study at a University. Thus, of the statutes which Archbishop Forman of St. Andrews (1515–21) ordered to be published annually in his Diocesan Synod, one enjoined that in order that the University of that city might have a plentiful supply of students, and that 'religion'—that is, the cloistral life—might the more abound in virtue and knowledge, and the 'religious' be better instructed in the Gospel, so that the Catholic Church might be more fully equipped in its contest with 'barking heretics,' who were making havoc of the faith, the Superiors of the nine greater monasteries of the diocese should each send two monks; and those of the four lesser houses—Kelso, Dryburgh, Coldingham, and Balmerino—one monk each to reside and study continuously at the University

<sup>1</sup> Maxwell's *Old Dundee Prior to the Reformation*, pp. 72–3.



‘according to the ancient, approved, and laudable custom.’ Their maintenance was to be provided by their respective monasteries, and for each monk of the prescribed number whom they failed to send a fine of £20 Scots was to be imposed, and applied to pious uses at the will of the Archbishop.<sup>1</sup>

Again, in the year 1549, a Council of the Scottish Church which assembled in Edinburgh ordained that from the monasteries of every diocese of the kingdom a few ‘religious’ of greatest capacity for learning should be sent to the University nearest them, or to any other they might prefer, to reside there and study Theology for four years at least, on the completion of which period others should succeed them. Three such students were to be sent from St. Andrews Priory, and the same number from Arbroath Abbey; two from each of the Abbeys of Cupar (Angus) and Dunfermline; and one from each of those of Lindores and Balmerino.<sup>2</sup>

The duty of preaching having come to be scandalously neglected by the clergy of every rank, the same Council of the Church enacted, among several canons for the correction of this failure, one providing that in every monastery a licentiate in Theology, religious or secular, should be found and maintained who should every reading day, or at least every week, be obliged to read and expound Sacred Literature within the monastery, in such a way as might be expedient for the auditors, and preach in the church attached to the monastery. To the preacher in Balmerino Abbey the rectory—that is, the greater tithes—of Logie-Murdoch was assigned for his maintenance; and to the preacher in Lindores Abbey the vicarage of Dundee was assigned.<sup>3</sup> At another Council of the Church held in the year 1552 a confession that these and divers other canons prescribed had not yet taken effect, on account of the troubles of the time and many impediments, was followed by

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<sup>1</sup> Robertson's *Concilia Scotie*, pp. clxxxvii, cclxxxiv.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 102-3.

<sup>3</sup> *Concilia Scotie*, pp. 100-1, 116.



provisions for their immediate enforcement.<sup>1</sup> It may therefore perhaps be presumed that the canons would now be obeyed at Balmerino Abbey. These and numerous other reforms enjoined by the Council were utterly inadequate to ward off the ruin impending over the Roman Catholic Church in this country.

It is probable that long before the period at which we have now arrived the greater part of the lands of Balmerino Abbey was let to tenants, and that some portions were feued. In a letter from King James V. to Pope Paul III. in the year 1540 he says:—‘It has been, Holy Father, the established custom in this kingdom for all ecclesiastical prelates’—a phrase which included the Superiors of monasteries—‘to let their lands and tithes for nineteen years to their tenants and renters.’ To give a single example, in the year 1544 four acres of land, with the tithes, or *teinds* as they are called in Scotland, included, west of Byres of Balmerino, were let by the convent for nineteen years, and the rent was 30s. and 8 poultry.

As regards feuing, the rule of the Canon law was, at first, that the heritable property of the Church could not be alienated either by feu or sale. But the Pope afterwards assumed the power of authorizing alienations, which without his consent were void. The Primary Bull of Pope Innocent IV. to Balmerino Abbey forbade, as we have seen, its monks to alienate their lands without the consent of the Chapter, or the major or wiser part of it; leaving it to be inferred that when this consent was obtained, such alienations were ecclesiastically valid without any special permission from Rome. Previous to the Reformation, indeed, confirmation, either by the Sovereign or the Pope, of feus of Church lands was not required in Scotland by express enactment.<sup>2</sup> Yet several feu-

<sup>1</sup> *Concilia Scotiæ*, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> Forbes's *Treatise of Church Lands and Tithes*, p. 144.







COMMON SEAL OF THE CONVENT OF BALMERINO.



charters of the lands of Balmerino Abbey were confirmed by both the Pope and the Crown.

Though feus were common in some monasteries from an early period of their existence, it does not appear from any extant records that the monks of Balmerino had alienated much of their land till the time of Robert, the last Abbot. During his rule the convent, probably foreseeing the approach of the storm which was soon to sweep away the whole monastic system, began to feu their lands and fishings to the existing tenants and others—in some instances to their own relatives—for such sums of ready money as they could obtain, reserving only the superiority and annual feu-duties. In so doing they but followed the example of most other Churchmen of the period. In many of the feu-charters granted by them an anxiety is observable to specify reasons sufficient to justify the alienations—such as the repair, convenience, or advantage of the monastery, and the sums of money received in the great and urgent necessity of the convent; while it is stated that the Canon law permits the feuing of lands and tithes. Before the year 1559 almost the whole of the Abbey lands and fishings had thus been alienated. In numerous cases the feu-duties appear to have consisted of the rents formerly paid by the tenants, with something added for ‘augmentation,’ that is, of the revenue of the monastery.<sup>1</sup>

In *early* times the affixing of the Common Seal of an Abbey to a feu-charter served as evidence of the consent of the convent, since this was never done except at a solemn meeting when the monks were assembled in Chapter, all being present, and the majority consenting. Latterly, to prevent fraud or forgery, subscribing by the convent was enjoined by Parliament.<sup>2</sup> There are still in existence, and generally in the possession of those whose lands were originally feued from Balmerino Abbey, many feu-charters subscribed by the

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<sup>1</sup> See *Appendix*, Nos. VII., X., XXVII.

<sup>2</sup> Forbes, p. 147.



Abbot and monks, and which once had the Common Seal of the convent appended to them, though in most cases this has disappeared.

The Common Seal, which was oval-shaped and pointed at the two extremities, contained a full-length figure of the Blessed Virgin and Holy Child standing within a Gothic niche richly ornamented. In the lower part of the Seal was a shield bearing the arms of Scotland. Round the border was the Scroll:—

**ſigillum cōmune ſancte marie de balmorynach.**

*Translation*—THE COMMON SEAL OF SAINT MARY OF BALMORYNACH.

In the Chapter-house, Westminster, there is a detached Seal of an Abbot of Balmerino, but not bearing his name. It is oval-pointed, and contains the figure of the Abbot with the crozier in his left hand. On the dexter side of the figure there appears to be a *fleur-de-lis*, and three mullets of six points. The scroll runs thus:—

**S' ABBIS. SCI. EDWARDI IN SCOCIA.**

*Translation*—SEAL OF THE ABBOT OF ST. EDWARD IN SCOTLAND.<sup>1</sup>

These two seals show that as the Abbey was dedicated to St. Mary and St. Edward, so it was sometimes named after one of its patron saints, and sometimes after the other; and the same variety of designation occurs in other ancient documents.

I have not met with the names of the *common monks* of Balmerino—with one or two exceptions—till the time of ROBERT the last regular Abbot, to whose reign belong all the pre-Reformation charters subscribed by the convent which I have seen—perhaps all that are now extant. Nor are any of the *Priors* mentioned by their title, though, according

<sup>1</sup> H. Laing's *Catalogue of Ancient Scottish Seals*, Nos. 982, 983.





SEAL OF AN ABBOT OF BALMERINO.





J abbat of last 1537  
 1st ego Jacobus m. 12  
 2d ego Jacobus Hartw. 1537  
 3d ego Johannes m. 12 ad id  
 4d ego Johannes Bonar ad id  
 5d ego Andreas Bonar ad id  
 6d ego albertus luff ad id  
 7d ego Thomas Steynson ad id  
 8d ego albertus gregg ad id  
 9d ego albertus kimmis ad id  
 10d ego Johannes huff ad id  
 11d ego David Bonar  
 12d ego Johannes huff ad id  
 13d ego Johannes huff ad id  
 14d ego albertus huff ad id  
 15d ego Johannes huff ad id

Signatures of Abbot and fourteen Monks of Balmerino, in 1537.



to the Cistercian rules, there must have been such an official. In the year 1511 the Commission of the Bailiary of Barry to Sir Thomas Maule is signed by Abbot Robert and eight monks, whose names are WILLIAM MURRAY, RICHARD ULE, ALEXANDER NEFOY, THOMAS AYR, WILLIAM BAUCH, JAMES HARWOD, THOMAS HARTHOWR, and ALEXANDER SWINTON.<sup>1</sup>

On the opposite page will be found a fac-simile of the signatures—fifteen in number—attached to a Tack of four acres of land at Barry, granted by the convent to Robert Downie, and dated the 24th of October 1537. With the exception of JAMES HARWOD, the monks are all different from those who sign in 1511. The names and other words are here printed in full; the translation of the first two lines being:—‘[I] ROBERT, Abbot of Balmerinloch, subscribe. And I, JAMES MYLLAR [subscribe] to the same.’

ROBERT, Abbot of Balmerinloch, subscribo.  
Et ego IACOBUS MYLLAR, ad idem.  
Et ego IACOBUS HARWOD, ad idem.  
Et ego WILLELMUS MOWAT (?), ad idem.  
Et ego IOHANNES BONAR, ad idem.  
Et ego ANDREAS BUTOUR, ad idem.  
Et ego ALEXANDER LEYSS, ad idem.  
Et ego THOMAS STEVYNSON, ad idem.  
Et ego ALEXANDER GAGYE, ad idem.  
Et ego ANDREAS WEMYSS, ad idem.  
Et ego IOHANNES HOGG, ad idem.  
Et ego DAVID LOWDEN, manu propria.  
Et ego IOHANNES HALYBORTON, manu propria.  
Et ego ALLANUS HAW, ad idem.  
Et ego GEORGIUS MATTHOW, ad idem.

As two of the monks sign, each *manu propria* (with his own hand), it might be supposed that the rest were unable to write, and that their names were subscribed by another hand. But to say nothing of the improbability that only two out

<sup>1</sup> *Registrum de Panmure*, vol. ii, p. 280.



of fourteen common monks were able in that age to sign their own names, such a supposition appears unwarrantable when we find that in several other charters Lowden and Halyburton sign their names just as the other monks do, without adding *manu propria*; and that in one charter JOHN YESTER—a monk to be presently mentioned—signs his name without these words though he was a notary-public, and therefore able to write.

In other charters, granted about the same period or at later dates, occur the additional names of ANDREW GAGYE, JOHN MILLER, ANDREW GRIG, ANDREW MURRAY, ANDREW LAWYAR, JOHN YESTIR, AND PATRICK YESTIR. The two last names, which occur in a charter of the year 1555, have not been found in earlier documents. This seems to show that these men had not been deterred from entering the monastery by the treatment to which the English had subjected it in 1547. While the charter of 1537 and another of 1541 contain each fifteen names, others of 1547 and 1550 have eleven each. One of 1555 has only eight subscribers; but another of the same year has twelve. From these facts, as well as from the circumstance that the consent of only the majority of the chapter was required to give validity to an alienation of land, as has been already stated—not to mention other reasons—it may be inferred that charters were not in every case signed by all the monks of the convent, and that the whole number of the brethren was thus probably greater than that of the subscriptions which any single charter bears. The names in extant documents show that the common class of monks about the same period—the first half of the sixteenth century—was drawn from the humbler rank of the neighbouring inhabitants. On the other hand, the Superiors of Religious houses, as well as the secular clergy at that time, were mostly connected with families of good social position.

In no record have the names of any of the *converts*, or lay brethren, been found. As the practice of leasing or feuing the Abbey lands became more frequent, it is probable that



the number of these brethren would diminish. In 1540 the converts in Melrose Abbey were not quite so numerous as the monks.

In the year 1554 the Abbot of Balmerino signed the Band to the Duke of Chatelherault (Earl of Arran) warranting him against any action for his intromissions with Queen Mary's money, jewels, and other property.<sup>1</sup>

It appears that in 1557 one of the monks slew a man. All that we know of the deed is contained in the following extract from the Register of the Privy Seal,<sup>2</sup> which records that after the lapse of eight years the criminal received a respite for nineteen years:—

'Ane respitt maid to Dene Patrik Zeister sumtyme monk of Balmerino<sup>t</sup> for the crewell slauchter of unquile Johnne Bane in Balmerino<sup>t</sup> committit aucht zeiris syne or thairby; and for all actionn and cryme etc. And for the space of nyntene zeiris nixt to cum eftir the day of the dait of the samine but ony revocationn to endure, etc. At Edinburgh the vj day of October the zeir of God j<sup>m</sup>v<sup>cl</sup>xv zeiris,' (1565).

We have now to notice a matter in which the monks were at variance with their Abbot, and grave allegations were made against some of the officials of the monastery.

On the 29th of November 1557 the Queen's advocates raise an action in the Court of Session against Abbot Robert and the convent, John Forester a natural son of the Abbot and chamberlain of the Abbey, Sir Alexander Ker (or Car) chaplain and notary, and Dean Andrew Boytour Sub-Prior of the Abbey—alleging that the Abbot and convent had infeft Andrew Fairmy of that Ilk, his wife, and son in the 'twa part' of Grange of Barry etc., by virtue of which the Fairmys have possessed the property for eighteen years or thereby, and do so still; but that the Abbot and convent and John Forester have within the past year forged a charter, and precept and instru-

<sup>1</sup> *Acts Scot. Parl.*

<sup>2</sup> Vol. xxxiii. fol. 105.





ment of sasine, of these lands, ante-dated as if granted in May 1536, to the said John; and that he, alleging that these documents have been in the keeping of the Abbot and convent continuously since they were executed, has obtained, by collusion, letters requiring delivery thereof to him; that the Sub-Prior, writer of the Abbey Register, has inserted a copy of the documents in the Register Books of the Abbey of the same date as the forged charter, so that the falsehood and forging of them might be less suspected; and that the documents were written by Ker. The advocates, therefore, call for the production of the said documents and Register Book with a view to their improbation. The case is continued.

On the 20th of December following, the monks of the convent raise an action against the Fairnys on the one part, and John Forester on the other—alleging that the former have been in possession of the lands above mentioned for twenty years or thereby; that the latter having molested the Fairnys in their peaceable brooking thereof, they have obtained decreet against the convent for warrandice, conform to their charter; also that Forester, by collusion with his father, has had the convent charged to deliver to him his ‘evidentis’ of the lands, and that thus either of these parties, by virtue of their letters, ‘intendis to put thame [the monks] to the horn, to their hewy dampnage and skayth, that are poor religious men, and obedient to their said Abbot, and hes nowther *nolle* nor *welle* by his awyis (*i.e.* against his advice), and nevir knew, hard, nor saw ony siklike pretendit evidentis as is above writtin, he ressonne ther wes nevir sik evidentis maid, nor being in their keeping, nor yit being *in rerum natura*.’ The convent, therefore, call both parties to produce the decreets they have obtained, that the Lords may find which of them is orderly proceeded. No appearance being made for John Forester, his letters are suspended, and the other party’s letters found orderly proceeded.

This litigation was continued for several years. It may be



ment of sasine, of these lands, ante-dated as if granted in May 1536, to the said John; and that he, alleging that these documents have been in the keeping of the Abbot and convent continuously since they were executed, has obtained, by collusion, letters requiring delivery thereof to him; that the Sub-Prior, writer of the Abbey Register, has inserted a copy of the documents in the Register Books of the Abbey of the same date as the forged charter, so that the falsehood and forging of them might be less suspected; and that the documents were written by Ker. The advocates, therefore, call for the production of the said documents and Register Book with a view to their improbation. The case is continued.

On the 20th of December following, the monks of the convent raise an action against the Fairnys on the one part, and John Forester on the other—alleging that the former have been in possession of the lands above mentioned for twenty years or thereby; that the latter having molested the Fairnys in their peaceable brooking thereof, they have obtained decreet against the convent for warrandice, conform to their charter; also that Forester, by collusion with his father, has had the convent charged to deliver to him his ‘evidentis’ of the lands, and that thus either of these parties, by virtue of their letters, ‘intendis to put thame [the monks] to the horn, to their hewy dampnage and skayth, that are poor religeous men, and obedient to their said Abbot, and hes nowther *nolle* nor *velle* by his awyis (*i.e.* against his advice), and nevir knew, hard, nor saw ony siklike pretendit evidentis as is above writtin, be ressonne ther wes nevir sik evidentis maid, nor being in their keeping, nor yit being *in rerum natura*.’ The convent, therefore, call both parties to produce the decreets they have obtained, that the Lords may find which of them is orderly proceeded. No appearance being made for John Forester, his letters are suspended, and the other party’s letters found orderly proceeded.

This litigation was continued for several years. It may be



sufficient to state that on the 25th of May 1559 decret is granted that the Abbot and convent shall warrant the lands to the Fairnys. On the 5th of February 1560-1 the Queen's advocates raise an action against John Forester for forgery of the instrument of 15th November 1536. On the 10th of March 1562-3 Forester is assoilzied from the action for forgery, reserving his adversary's right to object against the instrument when the process of reduction against the Fairnys is heard. Here my information regarding the case ends.

Abbot Robert in his declining years took part in an act of cruel persecution. Walter Myln, parish priest of Lunan in Forfarshire, a man venerable for his piety as well as for his great age, was tried in the year 1558 for heresy, that is, for belief in the Protestant doctrines, which he had embraced during an early residence in Germany. Foxe, who gives an interesting account of his trial,<sup>1</sup> which took place in St. Andrews Cathedral, informs us that there were present the Archbishop with other four Bishops, the Abbots of Dunfermline, Lindores, Balmerino, and Cowper (Angus), besides several Doctors of Theology and friars. Though eighty-two years of age, Myln made an able and vigorous defence. He was, of course, found guilty, and sentenced to be delivered to the temporal judge that he might be burnt as a heretic. But no one could be got to act as his temporal judge till an ignorant and cruel domestic of the Archbishop undertook the odious office—Patrick Learmond, Provost of St. Andrews and Bailie of the Archbishop's regality, to whom in his latter capacity such duty belonged, having refused to perform it. Neither a cord to tie Myln to the stake, nor a tar barrel to burn him could be got from any of the citizens for money; and the ropes of the Archbishop's pavilion had to be used to bind him. He was committed to the flames upon the rising ground north

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<sup>1</sup> See Laing's ed. of *Knox's Works*, vol. i. p. 308; and p. 550, where Foxe's account is inserted.



of the Cathedral on the 28th of April 1553. In the following year the images in the Cathedral were taken out by the Reformers and burnt on the same spot. Myln's death excited universal horror and indignation. When his end was near, he had said, 'I trust to God that I shall be the last in Scotland that shall suffer for this cause.' His hope was realized. The principles of the Reformation, which had been struggling for recognition during thirty years, and the zeal of whose adherents was greatly stimulated by the affecting circumstances of his martyrdom, were now on the eve of triumph; 'the handwriting was on the wall'; and in little more than a year after Myln's death the Abbots of Balmerino and Lindores, as well as other Abbots, had to witness the ruin of their monasteries. How this came to pass has now to be told.

The Reformation was in Scotland characterized by proceedings of a more violent and lawless nature than in England. In the latter country it was effected mainly by the prerogative of the Crown, and was thus conducted in a more orderly, though, as regards the monasteries, in a scarcely less severe manner than in the northern kingdom. Here, though the movement was headed or supported by influential nobles and barons, who were zealous for the truth and hungering for the Church lands, and also by many Abbots and Priors, it was opposed by the Court and almost the whole body of the Bishops. The people therefore took the principal part in the work of reformation; and, roused by the fervid eloquence of Knox, and having at every step to contend with opposition in high places, they gave vent to their hatred of 'Popery' by destroying the monasteries, and stripping the churches of images, altars, and other superstitious decorations. We have seen that as early as the year 1543 certain Religious houses in Dundee, and also the Abbey of Lindores, had been sacked by a mob. The movement, however, appears to have been then practically confined to those places. But in 1559 and onwards it was more systematically and extensively prosecuted.





It commenced on the 11th of May of that year at Perth, where the images and other symbols of Romish worship in St. John's church were cast down and destroyed, and the monasteries of the Black and Grey Friars, as well as the magnificent Charterhouse, were demolished in two days, so that nothing but the walls remained. From Perth the 'Lords of the Congregation,' as the reforming barons and other magnates were called, repaired to St. Andrews, where they had requested their friends from other places to assemble. There they were joined by Knox after he had preached at Crail and Anstruther, where the people had been moved by his preaching to purify their churches—St. Ayle's chapel in the latter of these towns, which belonged to Balmerino Abbey, being probably one of those so dealt with. At St. Andrews Knox preached on Sunday the 11th of June and the three following days, in disregard of a message sent by the Archbishop to the Lords, threatening that if he presumed to do so 'he should gar him be saluted with a dosane of culveringis, quherof the most part should lyght upon his nose.' The subject of his famous sermon on the Sunday was the ejection of the buyers and sellers from the Temple of Jerusalem, which he applied to the corruptions of the Church of Rome, and to the duty of those in power to reform them. The result was that the Provost and Bailies, as well as the citizens for the most part 'did agree to remove all monuments of idolatry; which also they did with expedition.'<sup>1</sup> This work commenced on the 14th of June. A few days after, 'the Abbey of Lindores,' says Knox, 'a place of black monks, . . . was reformed, their altars overthrown, their idols, vestments of idolatry, and mass books were burnt in their own presence,

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<sup>1</sup> *Knox's Works*, vol. i. pp. 347–9. In a '*Historie of the Estate of Scotland*' printed in the Miscellany of the Wodrow Society (p. 59) it is stated that Knox's sermon was made in 'the parish Kirk.' Spottiswoode (vol. i. p. 276) makes the same statement. Knox himself does not distinctly say in what church he preached. There is neither proof nor probability that the fabric of the Cathedral was materially injured at this time.



and they commanded to cast away their monkish habits.’<sup>1</sup> Balmerino Abbey was next visited by the Reformers—apparently in the third week of June 1559—as appears from the account of their proceedings given by Bishop Lesley, a keen opponent of Protestantism. He states that the Earl of Argyll and the Prior of St. Andrews—better known afterwards as the Regent Moray—came from Perth to St. Andrews, and there ‘caused cast down alteris, burne the images of all the kirkis within that citie, and to pull downe the freris places, kirkis, and bigginis, with the college kirke of Heuche, and all uther privat chappellis within the toun; and convenit a gret cumpanie of the cuntrie men, and passed to the abbayis of Lundoris, Balmerino, the parishe kirkis within Fyfe, and did the like; and from that to Cuper, quhair thay remaned.’<sup>2</sup> In his Latin History Lesley gives a similar account of what was done; and says that ‘all the most worthless manikins of the common people, flocking to them’—that is, to the Reformers marching from St. Andrews—‘as to a foul sink, they proceed to the monasteries of Lindores and Balmerino.’<sup>3</sup> David Camerarius (Chambers), who lived in the early part of the following century, states that the reforming mob applied fire to ‘the very celebrated Abbeyes of Lundores, Balmerino, and Cwper,’ injuriously treated the monks and priests, and devoted to their own uses the sacred vessels and ornaments.’<sup>4</sup>

As in the previous attack by the English, it is uncertain in what condition Balmerino Abbey, and especially its Church, was left when the reforming rabble had done their work. The domestic buildings of the monks were everywhere the chief

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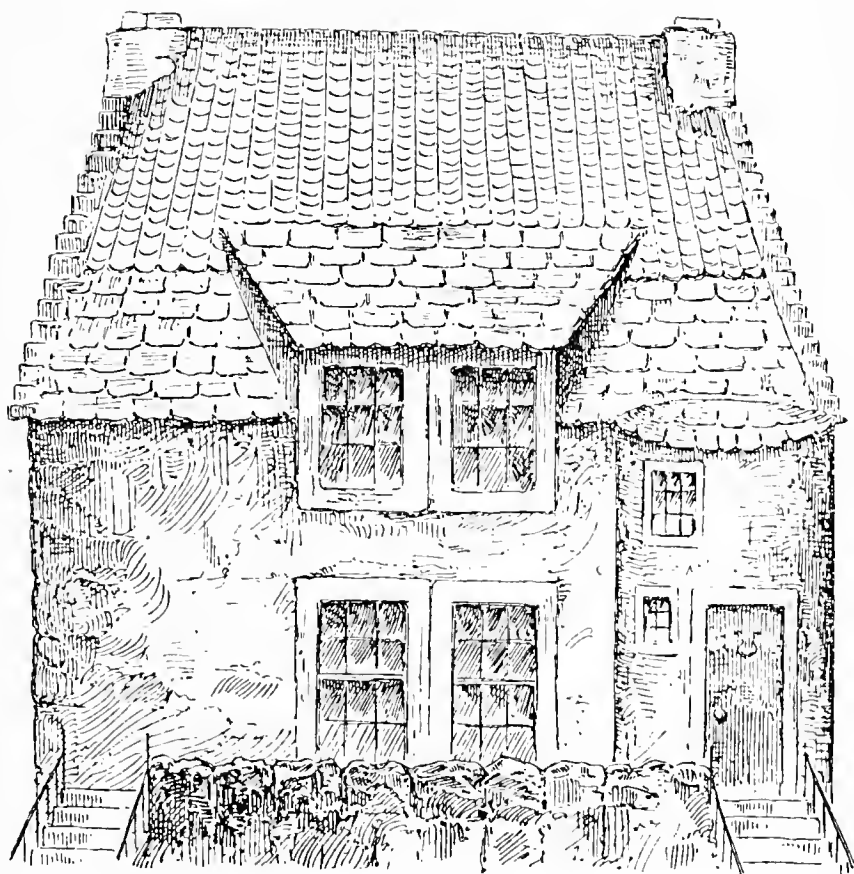
<sup>1</sup> *Knox's Works*, vol. vi. p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Scotland*, p. 273. The curate of Cupar took so much to heart the removal of the ‘instruments of idolatry’ from his church that on the next day he committed suicide.

<sup>3</sup> *De Origine, etc. Scotorum*, p. 507 (ed. 1675).

<sup>4</sup> *De Scotorum Fortitudine*, etc., Parisiis, MDCXXXI. p. 271. This author must be distinguished from another of the same name who was concerned in the conspiracy for the destruction of Darnley.





ST AYLE'S HOUSE, ANSTRUTHER.

*(From a Sketch made about fifty years since.)*



objects of hostility; and it is probable that the ruination of those at Balmerino, as elsewhere, would be so thorough as to prevent their being ever again used for their original purposes. But as regards churches, the practice of the Reformers was merely to destroy 'the monuments of idolatry' which they contained. Only in some few and peculiar cases were the *fabrics* demolished. If we may estimate the work of the mob at Balmerino from what they did at Lindores, the Abbey Church would be left standing, though stripped of its images and decorations; for it is now known that the Church of Lindores Abbey was so left, and was not even unroofed. But whatever may have been done at the Reformation, the Church and other buildings of Balmerino Abbey were not reduced to their *present* scanty extent till a period comparatively recent. This subject will be resumed in a following Chapter.

As regards the fate of the several chapels which belonged to the Abbey, that of St. Ayle's at Balmerino will be noticed later. There is no record of the means by which the chapel at Gadven, or that of St. Mary at Gateside, ceased to exist. Whether St. Ayle's chapel at Anstruther was, or was not dealt with by the reforming mob in 1559, a portion of it remained till modern times. About a hundred years ago the upper portion of its east gable, which contained a mullioned window, was removed; and the rest of it was taken down by the present proprietor. On the ground beside its site there still stands an old building called St. Ayle's House, and believed to have been connected with the chapel. Its exterior is entire, but has undergone alteration. It has surrounding walls, and an arched gateway in tolerably good preservation. The round outside staircase, dumpy chimneys, and wide fireplace give evidence of some antiquity. The lintel and rybites of the chapel window above mentioned are built into the wall of the present fishyard—for the place, true to its ancient character, is still devoted to the same useful purpose as in monastic times. 'St. Ayle's acre' lay about eighty yards farther north.





The despoiling of Balmerino Abbey must have brought to an end the conventual life and worship of the monks, as they could no longer continue their daily and nightly Church services, nor live in community. While we must lament the fate of the sumptuous buildings—which might have been utilized as a seminary of learning, or in other ways for the good of the Parish and adjacent district—and the loss of the valuable and interesting objects of various kinds which must have perished under the ruthless hands of its fierce assailants, whether English or Scotch, we must still more rejoice that the country was delivered from Romish error and superstition; that the Gospel in its purity was soon to be preached to the people; and that the external organization of the Church was to be restored to a form more nearly resembling that of primitive times.

As the Reformation did not receive Parliamentary sanction till August 1560, the monks of Balmerino, though driven from their snug quarters, would for a year or two longer continue to enjoy the *revenues* of the monastery. Thus we find Abbot Robert and the convent—doubtless in order to make the most of their altered circumstances, as well as to save themselves trouble by procuring their whole income to be paid to them in one sum—granting on the 4th of August 1559 to the notorious James Balfour, parson of Flisk, and Andrew Balfour of Montquhany, his father, a ‘Tack of the fruits, rents, profits, teinds, fishings, and other duties pertaining to the Abbacy, for five years after Martinmas 1559, for the yearly payment of 900 merks, Scots money.’<sup>1</sup> If this sum represented, as it seems to have done, the Abbey revenue from its possessions without as well as within Balmerino Parish, it was much less than the real value; and the Balfours must have made ‘a good thing’ of their Tack.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘*Inventar of Writts*’—a large MS. volume which belonged to the Lords Balmerino, and is now in the possession of the proprietor of the Balmerino estate. From this source much original information has been obtained for the present work. It will be quoted as the *Balmerino Writts*.



The Privy Council having in 1561 enacted that the old clergy should be allowed to retain two-thirds of their revenues during their lifetime, and that the remaining third should be appropriated partly for stipends to the parish ministers, and partly for the use of the Crown—of which enactment many Abbots and Priors, and also Commendators, reaped the benefit—rentals, said to have been undervalued, of most of the benefices of the kingdom were given in. The *Thirds* were uplifted annually by Collectors appointed by the Crown. This was called the *Assumption of Thirds*. The revenues of Balmerino Abbey ‘lifted out of the baronies of Balmerinloch, Pitgorno, and Barrie; together with the kirks of Balmerinloch, Logie-Murdoch, and Barrie, and the fishings upon the river Tay,’ were thus found to consist of the following particulars in money, grain, and poultry:—

Money, £704, 11s. 2d.

Wheat, 4 chalders.

Beare, 21 chalders, 12 bolls, 3 firlots, 2 pecks.

Meall, 15 chalders, 12 bolls, 2 firlots.

Aittis, 1 chalder, 14 bolls, 2 firlots.

Poultry, 763.<sup>1</sup>

Out of the Third of this revenue, which consisted mainly of feu-duties, there was then paid to the Sovereign £100, and in 1591, £271.

Abbot Robert did not long survive the attack on the monastery in 1559. The precise date of his death is unknown. Lesley places it in 1558; but we have seen that he was alive in August 1559; and there is evidence that he died before the 5th of February 1560–1. At this period, on the death of the Superior of a Religious house the Sovereign generally appointed a layman in his place, called the *Commendator*, who enjoyed, along with the convent, the benefice; and sat

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<sup>1</sup> From a MS. in the Advocates' Library. See also Keith's *History of the Church and State of Scotland*, vol. iii. p. 375 (ed. 1850).



be allowed to continue in the enjoyment of their  
and livings if they would embrace Protestantism; 'all  
all should be taken from them for their obstinacy.  
upon it came to pass that some of them became real  
some preachers also.'<sup>1</sup> When a monk died, his  
became the property of the Crown. Many of the monks  
reduced to beggary through the avarice of those in  
possession of the Church lands.

'Hope guides the young, but when the old must pass  
The threshold, whither shall they turn to find  
The hospitality—the alms (alas!  
Alms may be needed) which that House bestowed?'

The number of monks, however, who embraced  
tanism was great. In the Cistercian Abbey of  
there were, according to the Abbot's statement, 'nine  
five whereof had recanted, but the other four would  
any persuasion. And he mentions a certain allowance  
given to those that had recanted; but had given none  
the others'—surely a cruel, as well as an ineffectual  
of conversion.<sup>2</sup> Martine informs us that of thirty-four  
in St. Andrews Priory no fewer than fourteen became  
in churches belonging to the Priory; and some of them  
about the monastery till their death.<sup>3</sup> The first  
minister of Leuchars was John Ure, formerly a canon  
Priory, to which Leuchars church belonged. In 157

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<sup>1</sup> Row's *History of the Kirk of Scotland*, p. 13 (ed. 1842).

<sup>2</sup> Keith, vol. iii. p. 377.

<sup>3</sup> *Reliq. Div. Andr.*, pp. 169-70.



stated that 'seeing the most part of the persons who were Channons, Monks, and Friars within this realme have made profession of the true religion, it is therefore thought meet, that it be enjoined [to them] to pass and serve as readers at the places where they shall be appointed.'<sup>1</sup> It does not appear from existing sources of information that any of the monks of Balmerino became Protestant ministers; but several, probably all of them, embraced Protestantism, and continued to reside at Balmerino; and at least two of them did so till the year 1586. The 'convent' is mentioned in two charters dated so late as 1588 and 1600 respectively. None of the monks were alive on the 9th of July 1606.

In thus arriving at the termination of the proper history of the Abbey—that is, of the cloistral life of the monks—extending, as it did, over a period of three hundred and thirty years, we should bear in mind that the monastic system was not overturned till it had for some time lost whatever usefulness it once possessed. In the earlier stages of its development it was virtually a protest against the ignorance, barbarism, and lawlessness which then prevailed. It embodied an earnest though misguided reaction from worldliness and the worship of physical force. In the monasteries were reared the noblest characters that adorned the Church in those ages—the leaders in every enterprise of Christian zeal. The tenacity of life the monastic system exhibited, as well as the extension which it attained, proves that it had in it elements of truth and goodness, since no institution can flourish widely and long if it is rooted in falsehood or misconduct. But the period of the cloister's usefulness and honour passed away. The primary cause of the change was the vast amount of wealth which was heaped on the monasteries. This, in process of time, induced luxurious living, which in a mode of life so unnatural became the parent of vice. Thus they who had

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<sup>1</sup> *Booke of the Universall Kirk of Scotland*, vol. i. 280.





renounced the world were overcome by the world; and the word Monk, which had once been associated with ideas of austerity and saintliness, became at length synonymous with indolence and laxity of morals. There were other causes, too, for the general contempt into which the Monastic Orders had fallen from about the beginning of the sixteenth century. The world had not been standing still during the previous ages. Amongst various causes of progress, the printing-press had done much to loosen the bonds of superstition. An intellectual awakening had everywhere taken place. Men were beginning to examine into the verity of those things in the belief and practice of which they had been trained; and when the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures in the language of the people came to aid and direct this spirit of inquiry, monachism was one of the things weighed in the balances and found wanting. The monks had in fact outlived their day, even as the nation had outgrown its childhood. When knowledge and true religion were being greatly extended, and law and civilization had attained some form and power, the monasteries were seen to be neither necessary nor beneficial; and the conventual life, wanting as it too generally did the salt of morality, had nothing in it that could save it from extinction. Finally, the unbounded devotion of the monks of every Order to the interests of the Papacy, when the nation was making determined efforts to throw off its yoke, excited against them such a spirit of hostility as caused the already full cup of indignation to overflow; and when the demand for reformation of the Church at length came in tones which refused a denial, the loudest cry raised was for the demolition of the Houses *then* misnamed Religious. Let us be thankful for the overthrow of Romanism, and of the monastic system, its strongest buttress. But let us also have the candour and right feeling to acknowledge our indebtedness to the monks of the Middle Ages for the sacred truth, the arts, and the civilization which their peaceful retirement,



studies, and labours preserved and bequeathed to us. And let us not forget that when the Gospel was at length to be purified from Romish error, the monks themselves were the chief agents in the good work. For as the decaying fruit of the tree is found to contain a new seed which it has secreted within itself, and out of which are to be evolved other forms of life and beauty; so the germ from which was to be developed the Protestant Church, was engendered amid the corruptions of the cloistral life. The Reformers in all countries, from Luther downwards, generally arose from among the Monastic Orders. And as the monks were the first to preach again the pure Gospel, so they were among the foremost to die for it. A large proportion of those who suffered death in Scotland for embracing the Reformed faith had been monks or friars.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE COMMENDATORS: JOHN HAY, HENRY KINNEIR, JOHN KINNEIR, AND ROBERT AUCHIMOUTY. THE ABBACY ERECTED INTO A TEMPORAL LORDSHIP

‘As with the Stream our voyage we pursue,  
The gross materials of this world present  
A marvellous study of wild accident,  
Uncouth proximities of old and new.’

—WORDSWORTH.

JOHN HAY, the first Commendator-Abbot of Balmerino, was probably descended from the ancient family of that name who had been Lairds of Naughton, but were now extinct in the principal male line. His appointment as Commendator would entitle him to the whole of the Abbey revenues till 1561, and after that year to two-thirds of them, subject during both periods to the maintenance of the surviving monks; the remaining third after 1561 being reserved for the use of the Protestant ministers and the Crown.

Commendator Hay was also Prior of Monymusk in Aberdeenshire,<sup>1</sup> the revenues of which were ‘set’ or valued after the Reformation at £400. A canon-regular of that house, named John Hay, and mentioned in 1522–5, was perhaps the same person who was afterwards promoted to be Prior.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Knox, *Works*, vol. ii. p. 482.

<sup>2</sup> Dates favour their identity; but a Proclamation by Mary in 1568 describes Hay the Prior as having been first a ‘simple clerk’ (*i.e.* a cleric), while the Earl of Moray, who was Prior of St. Andrews, is said to have been a ‘monk.’ Both Priories were houses of Augustinian canons.—(See *Topography and Antiquities of Aberdeen and Banff*, vol. iii. pp. 484–7 (Spalding Club); Macpherson’s *History of Monymusk*, pp. 162–5, 189.)



Hay was appointed Principal Master of Requests in 1554, according to Mackenzie; but according to Sibbald, in 1561.<sup>1</sup> The duty which originally belonged to that office was to represent to the Sovereign the complaints of the people, but this was afterwards performed by his Secretary. Commendator Hay was likewise a Privy Councillor, and was employed by Queen Mary and her advisers in various missions of a confidential nature. During her childhood—in 1544—he was sent by the Regent Arran as ‘Legate to Christian III., King of the Danes, Norwegians, Goths and Vandals.’<sup>2</sup> Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, ambassador of Queen Elisabeth, writing to her from Edinburgh in May 1565, describes Hay as one ‘who hath reputation here to be a wise and honest man’; and he adds, ‘I take him to be most affected towards the Earl of Moray.’<sup>3</sup>

On the 3rd of October 1562 Queen Mary, who was then at Aberdeen, ratified by a letter under the Privy Seal a yearly pension of £31, 4s. 4d. which Commendator Hay and the convent had conferred upon David Watt during his lifetime for service done to them by him, to be paid out of the fruits of the Abbey, and for the sure payment of which they had assigned to him the feu-duties of their fishings of Kilburns and lands of Cathills, which her Majesty ordained the feuars thenceforth to pay to him. The letter gives no information about Watt or the nature of the service rendered by him.<sup>4</sup>

In January 1564–5 occurred another ‘Queen’s visit’ to Balmerino. It would appear that Queen Mary had become tired of her palace of Holyrood on account of the censures which John Knox and the other Protestant leaders passed on her balls, concerts, and banquets; and especially in consequence

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<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie’s *List of the Officers of State*, appended to Sir John Scot of Scotstarvit’s *Staggering State of the Scots Statesmen*, pp. xxviii, 189; Sibbald’s *History of Fife and Kinross*, p. 263 (ed. 1803).

<sup>2</sup> *Epistole Regum Scotorum*, vol. ii. pp. 203, 213 (ed. 1724).

<sup>3</sup> Keith, vol. ii. p. 286.

<sup>4</sup> *Reg. Sec. Sigill.*, vol. xxxi. fol. 44.





of their personal remarks on herself and her fair attendants. She accordingly escaped from Edinburgh as often as she could, and took delight in visiting the provinces. One of the places to which she frequently resorted was St. Andrews. There, in January and February 1564-5, exchanging the pomp of royalty for the repose of domestic life, she resided in a merchant's house, attended by a few chosen friends, including, doubtless, some if not all of her 'four Marys.' An incident which took place during this visit to St. Andrews gives us an interesting glimpse of her unrestrained and happy life on those excursions from her capital. Randolph, the agent of Queen Elisabeth, had followed Mary to the Ancient City bearing a packet from his royal mistress on the subject of the proposed marriage of the Scottish Queen to the Earl of Leicester. But Mary refused to enter upon this business. 'I sent for you,' she said, 'to be merry, and to see how, like a bourgeois wife, I live with my little troop; and you will interrupt our pastime with your grave and great matters. I pray you, Sir, if you be weary here, return home to Edinburgh, and keep your gravity and great embassy until the Queen come thither; for, I assure you, you shall not get her here.' When Randolph expressed his surprise that her love for his Mistress had apparently cooled, it pleased her at this to be 'very merry,' he writes, and she called him 'by more names than were given him in his christendom. . . . Very merrily she passeth her time. After dinner she rideth abroad.'<sup>1</sup>

It was while on her way to make the visit to St. Andrews during which the incident above related occurred, that Queen Mary, in course of her progress thither, came to Balmerino—perhaps on the invitation of her Master of Requests, and to see a place associated with the names of two former Scottish Queens. 'In the end of January,' writes John Knox, 'the Queen past to Fyfe, and, visiting the Gentlemen's houses, was

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<sup>1</sup> Keith, vol. ii. p. 261, *note* 2.



magnificently banquetted everywhere, so that such superfluity was never seen before within this Realme, which caused the wilde fowl to be so dear, that partridges were sold for a crown a piece.<sup>1</sup> Misfortunes soon afterwards crowded upon Mary, but she was still popular; and, though already a widow, had only in the previous month completed her twenty-second year.

The Registers of the Great Seal and Privy Seal enable us to some extent to trace the Queen's progress through Fife by documents she signed at different places; and the information thus obtained is supplemented by other records. She was at Edinburgh on the 16th of January (1564-5); and having crossed the Firth of Forth, was at Falkland Palace on the 22nd and 23rd of the same month. Proceeding northwards, she was on the 24th at 'Cullerny' Castle; on the 26th at Ballinbreich Castle. At the latter place she signed a letter giving to Mr. John Leslie, parson of Oyne, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, the chanonry and prebend within the Cathedral Kirk of Murray called the archdeanery thereof, with houses, manses, etc., and the rents thereof due since its vacancy. This was the future Bishop of Ross, Mary's zealous and steadfast friend and defender. On the 28th of January she was at Balmerino. Here she must have been lodged in some of the Abbey buildings then standing—most probably in the Abbot's, at that time the Commendator's House, which was in existence till the present century. Her visit to Balmerino could not have occupied more than two days, as she arrived at St. Andrews on the evening of the 28th of January, which was a Sunday, and there wrote, or at least signed a letter to Queen Elisabeth, asking a safe-conduct for one of her subjects.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Knox's *Works*, vol. ii. p. 471.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*; *Reg. Sigill. Secr.*; Dr. Hay Fleming's *Mary Queen of Scots*, p. 531 and *note*; Prince Labanoff's *Recueil des Lettres de Marie Stuart*, tome i. p. 253, where the 25th is given as the date of Mary's letter written at St. Andrews, but other records show that this is a misprint for the 28th.



Whatever was the length of her visit to Balmerino, Mary found time here to write a letter of a remarkable character. It was addressed to James Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, nephew of Cardinal Beaton, and uncle of Mary Beaton, one of the Queen's 'four Marys.' He was then resident in Paris, where at the Reformation he had taken refuge, and was employed by Queen Mary, after her return to Scotland, as her ambassador at the French court. The letter was written mainly for the purpose of putting Queen Elisabeth's ambassador at Paris on a wrong scent, as Prince Labanoff expresses it; and is altogether a curious specimen of subtle statecraft—of the feminine variety. It is in the French language. In giving the following translation of the letter I may explain that the Queen mentioned in it was Catharine de Medici, Mary's mother-in-law but not her friend, who now governed France; that the allusion it contains to Mary's pension has reference to the fact, that after the assassination of her uncle, the Duke of Guise, her pension or dowry as widow of the French king, Francis II., was not regularly paid; and that the Cardinal who was to be written to was Mary's other uncle the Cardinal of Lorraine, younger brother of the Duke of Guise:—

'MY LORD OF GLASGOW,—I send this bearer more for show than for anything of importance—purposely to set people a-guessing what it is. Appear to be much annoyed that he has delayed so long; and, if it is possible, manage so that the ambassador of England may think he has come on business of importance; and go hurriedly to the Queen to demand an audience, and on the pretext of my pension, of which you will speak to her, contrive matter for conversation to occupy her long enough to make people think there is something of importance in this despatch. N. . . will acquaint you with the state of my affairs, whereby you will know the advantage we can derive from them; and on the next day speak again to her, if you can, and write to the Cardinal, as if it were all very urgent, but do not touch upon anything of it to him, except that you send him my letters to let him know my news; and send back to me as soon as you can, with the like diligence,



one of your people with all the news you can hear. And in this juncture I pray God to have you in his holy keeping.

‘ From Balmerino, this 28 January, 1565.

‘ Your very good mistress and friend,

‘ MARIE R.’<sup>1</sup>

There still exist portions of an ancient road which, according to tradition, led from Balmerino Abbey to St. Andrews. Proceeding either up the ‘ Kirkton Loan,’ or southwards from the Abbey along the course of the present public road, it passed eastward on the north side of the present Manse, and then close in front of Naughton House. Thence it led southwards to Gauldry, and across the moor to Kilmany valley, and leaving the present road near ‘ Brighthouse,’ passed over the hill towards the Gare Bridge, by which it crossed the Eiden. By this route the youthful Queen, with her merry ‘ troop ’ of ladies and other attendants, most probably travelled to St. Andrews. It was her custom on such occasions to be mounted on horseback, for in those days roads were rough and wheeled carriages rare. Perhaps she rode a milk-white steed, as we know she often did at the stag-hunt or the hawking.

‘ Light on her airy steed she sprung,  
Around with golden tassels hung.  
No chieftain there rode half so free,  
Or half so light or gracefully.’

It may be mentioned that Queen Mary remained at St. Andrews fourteen days on this occasion. During that time, however, she was at Struthers on the 7th of February. She afterwards visited Lundie, Durie, and Wemyss Castle. At the last of these houses she first met, on the 17th of February, her future husband the ill-fated Darnley, her union with whom was the beginning of her misfortunes.<sup>2</sup>

Returning to our Commendator, we find—probably as a

<sup>1</sup> Labanoff's *Recueil*, tome i. p. 250. See the original in Appendix No. IX.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Hay Fleming's *Mary Queen of Scots*, p. 531 and note; *Reg. Sigill. Scr.*





mark of the Queen's goodwill towards him, or as compensation for entertaining her during her visit to Balmerino—that the Third (amounting to £234, 13s. 4d.) of the money part of the Abbey revenue, and the Third (about 5¼ chalders) of the meal for crop 1565 were 'remitted and gevin fre be our Souvrane Lady to Mr. John Hay Abbot thairrof, att command of hir hienes writing.'<sup>1</sup>

On the 10th of February 1564-5, when the Tack granted by Abbot Robert to the Balfours had expired, the Commendator, with the consent of the convent—that is, such of the monks as still remained at Balmerino—granted to John Kinneir of that Ilk another Tack of the 'rents and fruits' of the Abbey for nineteen years after Martinmas 1564, for the yearly payment of 900 merks as before. This Tack was confirmed under the Great Seal on the 27th of July 1565.<sup>2</sup>

On the 15th of May 1565 Commendator Hay was present at a Convention of the nobility held at Stirling, when Queen Mary announced her purpose of marrying Darnley, and it was unanimously approved. This is said to have been the first time that Commendators sat in Council after the Queen's return from France.<sup>3</sup>

On the 14th of June of the same year Mary sent Hay as her ambassador to Queen Elisabeth, bearing the following letter:—

'Richt excellent, richt heich and nichtie Princesse, oure dearest suster and cousin, in oure maist hertlie maner we commend ws unto zou.<sup>4</sup> For certane materis of importance tending to the

<sup>1</sup> *Accounts of the Sub-Collector of the Thirds of Benefices*.—(General Register House.)

<sup>2</sup> *Balmerino Writs*. The Sovereign's confirmation of the Tack under the Great Seal is not contained in the existing Register of that Seal; and the same remark is applicable to several other documents which are stated in the *Balmerino Writs* to have been thus confirmed.

<sup>3</sup> Keith, vol. ii. p. 280 *note* (1).

<sup>4</sup> This use of *z* for *y*, as also that of *y* for *th*, was a substitution for the Old-English *ȝ* and *þ*, the equivalents of *y* and *th*. *Ye* was pronounced *the* and *zou* was pronounced *you*.



maintenance and conservatioun of the gude intelligenee and amytie standing betwix ws, we have presentlie direct towartis zou the berair<sup>r</sup> heiroyf oure trusty and weilbelovit connsalour maister John Hay, Commendatoure of Balmernoch, oure principall Maister of Requestes ; praying zou thairfore, gude suster, to grant him audience, and in sic thingis as he sall declair unto zou on oure behaulf, to gif him ferme credett as unto oure selff. And sa, richt heich, richt excellent and michtie Princesse, oure dearest suster and cousyn, we commit zou to the tuition of almighty God.

‘ Gevin under oure signet, at oure town of St Johnstoun [Perth], the 14th day of june, and of oure regne the 23th zeir, 1565.

‘ Zour richt gud sister and consigne,

‘ MARIE R.’<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this mission was to induce Queen Elisabeth to consent to Mary’s marriage with Darnley, and to intercede for the liberation of his mother the Countess of Lennox—who, being the sister of King James V., was Queen Mary’s aunt—and also for liberty to the Earl of Lennox, Darnley’s father, to pass and repass between England and Scotland as often as he pleased. Elisabeth ‘flew into a rage’ whenever Hay mentioned the marriage, and her answer to Mary’s request in favour of the Lennoxes was to send the Countess, who had hitherto been confined to her own apartment, to the Tower; and to summon Lennox and Darnley, who were her subjects, to return to England under the penalty of outlawry or forfeiture.<sup>2</sup> In the following month Hay was sent to the Earl of Moray to make known the goodwill of Lennox and Darnley towards him, and to assure him of the falsehood of the report which had gone abroad that they were meditating to slay him. Lennox at the same time offered to fight with any one who should dare to avow this.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Labanoff’s *Recueil*, tome i. p. 271 ; Keith, vol. ii. p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> *Spanish Calendar, Elizabeth*, i. 441, quoted in Dr. Hay Fleming’s *Mary Queen of Scots*, p. 345 ; Keith’s *History*, vol. ii. p. 293 (where Mary’s instructions to Hay are given in full) and p. 297.

<sup>3</sup> Keith, vol. ii. p. 333.



James Halyburtoun, Provost of Dundee, enjoyed a yearly pension of 300 merks for life from the Abbacy of Balmerino. The reason why, or the date at which this pension was conferred, does not appear. But Halyburtoun, who was a notable man in his day, and an able and strenuous supporter of the Reformation, had, for his resisting the Romanizing schemes of the Queen, been summoned before the Privy Council to answer for the crime of treason, and, not compearing, was put to the horn. On the 24th of August 1565 Commendator Hay received, by a letter under the Privy Seal, a gift, for himself, his heirs, and assignees, of the escheat of Halyburtoun's pension from the Abbacy, and of the liferent of the pension. And if the gift thus made by letter should for that reason be ineffectual, their Majesties (Mary and Darnley) promised, *verbo regis*, that as soon as the liferent pension should come into their hands and be at their disposal by the forfeiture of Halyburtoun, or in any other manner, they would grant it in the surest form and way that Hay would be pleased to accept.<sup>1</sup>

In the Parliament held in April 1567—the last which Mary was allowed to hold—John Hay was one of four Commendators who, with four bishops, were chosen to represent, among the Lords of the Articles, the spiritual Estate. At a meeting of the Privy Council in May of the same year he was superseded as Master of Requests by Thomas Hepburn, parson of Oldhamstocks, who was admitted to that office on the 17th of the month. This was two days after Queen Mary's marriage with Bothwell, and was probably one of its results; and in the Queen's Proclamation after her escape from Lochleven our Commendator is described, among Moray's supporters, as 'the dowbill flattering traytour, Maister Jhone Hay, quhome we promoveit fra ane pair simple clerk to ane abot and pryour.' Hepburn's appointment must have

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<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Secr. Sigill.*, vol. xxxiv. fol. 33.



been cancelled soon after; for on the 27th of August 1567, King James (that is, Moray, now Regent, in his name) 'made and confirmed' John Hay as Master of Requests during his life, and gave him a yearly pension of 300 merks out of the Thirds of benefices or other rents of the King, for his performance of the duties of that office. Whether Halyburtoun's pension had been restored to him, and this new gift of 300 merks to Hay was to compensate him for the loss of the other is uncertain. In the Parliament held in December of the same year—the first of the infant King, James VI.—at which the Regent Moray presided, amongst the Lords of the Articles Hay and other six Commendators, with three Bishops, were chosen as representatives of the spiritual Estate.<sup>1</sup>

On the 31st of December 1569 the Commendator received from the Crown a gift of the escheat of the whole goods, movable and immovable, gold and silver coined and uncoined, corns and cattle, etc., belonging to John Kinneir of that Ilk, who, as we have seen, had obtained a Tack of the rents and fruits of the Abbey, but had not paid to the Commendator certain of the teinds of Logy 'as a part of the patrimony of the said Abbay,' for the crop and year 1568. For this offence Kinneir was denounced as a rebel and put to the horn by a decret of the Lords of Session, and ordained 'to devoid and red himself, his servandis and guidis, furth of the Abbay and Houssis of Balmerinoch, yairdis, houssis, and dowcattis pertaining thairto, to the effect the said Commendatar may entir thairto.'<sup>2</sup>

On the 1st of June 1573 the Commendator and convent of Balmerino granted to Henry Kinneir, son of John Kinneir of that Ilk, a 'Tack of the teinds, teind sheaves, and other profits, rents, and duties of the townis and lands, with the pertinents, of the parochines and parish kirks of Logie and

<sup>1</sup> Keith, vol. ii. pp. 555, 589, 781; *Reg. Secr. Sig.*, vol. xxxvii. fol. 5; Dr. Hay Fleming's *Mary Queen of Scots*, p. 488.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. Secr. Sigill.*, vol. xxxviii. fol. 120.





Balmerinoch, for nineteen years after Lambmas 1573 for 100 merks yearly.<sup>1</sup>

John Hay died at Edinburgh on the 3rd of December 1573.<sup>2</sup> He was succeeded as Commendator of Balmerino by the above-mentioned Henry Kinneir; and as Prior of Monymusk by Alexander Forbes, Master of Arts, who was appointed on the 13th of August 1574 by charter under the Great Seal.

HENRY KINNEIR had in 1569 been provisionally nominated to the Commendatorship of the Abbey, which was to be given to him after the decease of John Hay.<sup>3</sup> That event having now taken place, he was presented to the office by letter under the Great Seal on the 7th of May 1574 from the Regent Morton in name of King James VI., who was then a minor. In the Leith Convention of 1572 (which modified the constitution of the Church and introduced Episcopacy as a temporary measure) it was arranged that Abbots and other Heads of religious houses were to be continued as part of the spiritual Estate of the realm, and examined by the Church, before their admission, as to their qualifications and fitness to give voice in Parliament; and they were to act as Senators of the College of Justice—eight of the fifteen Lords of Session, including the President, having been originally Churchmen. Henry Kinneir is accordingly described in his presentation as having been found by his Ordinary, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, to be a true professor of the Christian religion, conspicuous by his good behaviour and life, learned, and a Candidate in Philosophy in the University of St. Andrews, who had completed the twenty-first year of his age; and had made oath that he would obey the royal authority according to use and wont; and the Archbishop is required to give him

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<sup>1</sup> *Balmerino Writs.*

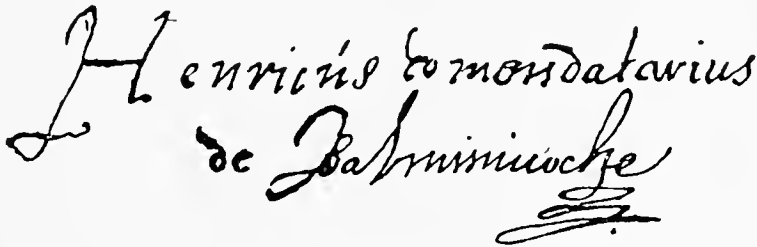
<sup>2</sup> *Reg. Confirmed Testaments* (Knox's *Works*, vol. ii. p. 482).

<sup>3</sup> *Reg. Presentations to Benefices.*



institution into office, which he is to hold during life. He was promoted to the bench, and his name occurs in a list of the Lords of Session of the year 1575. In 1583 the 'Abbot of Balmerino' was one of two 'Kirkmen Extraordinary' who were Lords of Session, the other being the 'Abbot of Newbottle.'<sup>1</sup>

In Henry Kinneir's presentation to the Commendatorship, above referred to, the King—that is, the Regent in his name—reserves an annual life-pension of £500 out of the two [third] parts of the Abbey revenues to James Douglas,



SIGNATURE OF COMMENDATOR HENRY KINNEIR.

'natural son of the Regent'; and out of the third of these revenues £80 as stipend to the minister of Balmerino and Logie; £20 to the reader of Logie; and to the minister of Barry £60 inclusive of its vicarage so soon as it shall be vacant.<sup>2</sup> The Commendator and convent—doubtless in compliance with a stipulation by Morton—afterwards granted to this James Douglas (of Spott) a precept conferring upon him the pension of £500. The doles to be given to the ministers for the performance of duty, when contrasted with the liberal provision made by the Regent for his bastard son, of whom no duty was required, form a striking illustration of the manner in which the revenues of the old Church were alienated from those objects—religious, educational, and

<sup>1</sup> *Estimate of the Scottish Nobility*, p. 41 (ed. by Rogers).

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. iv, No. 2232.



charitable—to which the Reformers sought to have them appropriated.

In August 1574 Commendator Henry Kinneir and the convent 'chapterly gathered' granted to Alison Gagy and her heirs a feu-charter of a house and garden at Bottom-craig, which had always previously been given *gratis*, with a cow's grass on the common pasture of Bottomcraig, for the yearly payment of two dozen chickens at Whitsunday, reserving to Jonet Bane, her mother, her liferent of the house and garden, which were then occupied by her. On the 28th of January following, the same Commendator and the convent granted to David Carnegie of Panbride a tack of the teinds of his lands of Easter Cruvy, in the parish of Logie, for nineteen years from Lammas 1575, for 'divers great sums of money' then paid to them, and a yearly rent of twenty merks. These two documents, which have been printed in the Appendix to the Abbey Chartulary, are chiefly noteworthy as containing, besides Kinneir's own signature, those of THOMAS STEWINSON and JOHN YESTER as then forming the 'convent'—the only survivors of the old fraternity. Their names occur as still forming the convent down to the year 1586. As it is also mentioned as existing in 1600, and as Yester had died before that year, the 'convent' must at last have consisted of Stevinson alone—*ultimus Romanorum*—the last of the Romans. He signed a charter as a member of the convent so early as the 5th of August 1535—the first signature of his I have met with. As he could not have become a monk, according to the Cistercian rules, till he was at least sixteen years of age, his life must have been a long one.

JOHN KINNEIR, son of Commendator Henry Kinneir, obtained in 1581 a gift of the benefice of the Abbacy, which his father then demitted into the King's hands for a new grant of it to the said John, who was accordingly appointed, on the



17th of April 1582, 'Abbot and Commendator of both the temporality and spirituality for life, there being reserved to his father his liferent thereof, and to the ministers of the churches of the benefice the stipends then assigned, or to be assigned to them out of its Third.'<sup>1</sup>

In July 1585 the 'Commendator of Balmerinoch' was present at a meeting of Parliament at St. Andrews, *Rege presente*, as one of those representing the spiritual Estate, and signed an Act empowering his Majesty to enter into a Protestant League with England.<sup>2</sup>

In April 1586 Commendator Henry and the convent gave to John Kinneir of Barnden—apparently his son above mentioned—with confirmation under the Great Seal, a tack of the fruits of the Abbacy for nineteen years after the following Martinmas, for the annual payment of 900 merks, as contained in James Balfour's Tack.<sup>3</sup>

In 1587 was passed the celebrated Annexation Act, whereby the *temporality* of Church benefices was annexed to the Crown; the 'castles, mansion-houses, and pertinents' of the dignified clergy being exempted from the annexation. This Act, as we shall see, affected the Abbacy of Balmerino.

In 1587-8 the King gave to James Meldrum of Segy the lands and barony of Barry, belonging to the Abbey, till he should pay to him the sum of £10,000 which he had spent in the public service. There is no farther mention of this, and Meldrum's possession of Barry was doubtless brief.<sup>4</sup>

On the 19th of December 1588 occurred certain transactions the record of which is interesting for this reason among others, that it specifies in detail the adjuncts and surroundings of the Abbey Place. Commendator Henry Kinneir and the

<sup>1</sup> *Balmerino Writs*; also *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. v. No. 391.

<sup>2</sup> Spottiswoode's *Hist. Ch. Scot.*, vol. ii. p. 329 (ed. 1851).

<sup>3</sup> *Balmerino Writs*.

<sup>4</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. v. Nos. 1384, 1439.





convent resign into the King's hands—for a new gift, as the sequel shows—‘the Manor-Place, of old called the Monastery of Balmerino,’ with houses, dove-cots, and other things within the inclosure and precinct of the same; the garden and orchard of the monastery, ‘with the place upon which the Church of the monastery was formerly situated—there being no parochial church (*nulla ecclesia parochiali existente*)<sup>1</sup>—and the yard or waste ground adjacent to it called the Cemetery of the Convent.’ At the same time Christina Beatoun, wife of the said Henry Kinneir, as the free tenant, and John Kinneir their eldest son, as feuar, resign the Wood of Balmerino with its lands; Barnden salmon fishing adjacent to it, and extending to Flisk Wood; four acres of Barneroft; the Green, with the plumyard possessed by John Yester, and inclosed by a stone dyke; with house and garden occupied by Richard Leyis; the Overmiln, miln-lands and multures; John Boyd's house; the malt-kiln and barn; the ward and nutyard, with the power of holding multure courts and of thirling the tenants of the monastery to the miln, with teinds of corn and fish; also the arable gardens of Balmerino, estimated at four acres; the fruit-yard and ‘brint-girnel,’ with corn teinds; the lands of Wood-flat extending to five acres, the lands of Harlands to four acres, the lands of Crossfaulds to four acres, of which the fourth (acre) called Loiremereiswoll (Lorimer's Well—Prior-well?) lies between the common road to the Cross, the Byres bridge, and the aqueduct; the barnyard, with usual common pasture, etc. Whereupon the King, on the same day, ‘considering that by the Reformation of religion within our kingdom the buildings of the said monastery have sustained great damage without any repair,’ etc. gives the above-mentioned subjects in feu to Commendator Henry Kinneir and Christina Betoun his spouse, and to the longest liver of them in life-

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<sup>1</sup> The meaning intended to be conveyed by these words was probably that the Abbey Church was not a parish church.



rent; and to John Kinneir and his heirs, for certain specified feu-duties.<sup>1</sup>

It would appear that Henry Kinneir was deprived of his interest in the Abbey for rebellion — the nature of his offence is not stated—and a gift of his life-rent escheat was conferred by the King on James Bartlett (or Barclay) in Cultra on the 8th of March 1600.<sup>2</sup> Bartlett, however, died before the 1st of October of that year; and it appears that by his death or from some other cause Henry Kinneir regained his interest in the Abbey.

Now comes the beginning of the end of the Abbey of Balmerinoch.

In July 1600 King James VI., on account of service done to him by Sir James Elphinstoun of Barntoun, his Secretary, who had incurred great expenses in performing the duties of his office, and had been deprived of the ordinary pension enjoyed by his predecessors, confers on him and his heirs, by charter under the Great Seal, the lands and barony of Barry (the Bailiary of which he had bestowed upon him in the previous year) with salmon fishings, etc. in the counties of Perth and Forfar, which the King of new incorporates in the free barony and regality of Barry; and he unites to it the advowson of the rectory and vicarage, and vicar-pensionary of the parish church of Barry, resigned by the Commendator and

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<sup>1</sup> MS. *Reg. Sigill. Mag.* and print, vol. v. Nos. 1608, 150. These properties (excepting the Abbey Place with its immediate surroundings, and the lands of Woodflat, Harlands, Crossfaulds, and Barnyard) had been feued by the Commendator and convent in May 1580, with confirmation under the Great Seal in March 1580-1 to James Betoun of Creich and his heirs, but they appear to have returned to the Kinneirs either with Cristina Betoun or in some other way before 1588.

<sup>2</sup> *Balmerino Writs*. The year anciently commenced on the 25th of March (Ladyday), and continued to do so in England till 1753. In Scotland, by royal proclamation it was made to commence, in the year 1600, on the 1st of January, as in France. But as the change was not at once generally adopted, it is often difficult to know, in the case of a date between the 1st of January and the 25th of March, to which year it is to be assigned. <sup>1</sup> This has led to much confusion of dates in the early part of the 17th century.



convent of Balmerino; and the King ordains that one sasine, to be taken at the Courthill of Barry, shall stand for the whole. The *reddendo* is fixed at a silver penny in the name of blench duty; and the rents and profits of the hereditary Bailiary of the barony are granted to Elphingstoun for the performance of that office; 'and the King promises to ratify this infeftment in his next Parliament.'<sup>1</sup>

Commendator John Kinneir appears to have died before 1603; and his death opened the way for the bestowal of additional favours on the new baron of Barry.

On the 20th of February 1603 the King, considering that the Monastery of Balmerino is now vacant by the death of John Kinneir the last Commendator, confers on Sir James Elphingstoun his Secretary (one of the Lords of the Privy Council and a Senator of the College of Justice) and his heirs male, the Place of the Abbacy, with houses, gardens, and other things within its precinct; the barony of Balmerino; annual rents belonging to the Abbacy in the burghs of Dundee, Perth, and Crail; the barony of Barry, with fishings above mentioned; the barony of Pitgorno; also the patronage of the churches of Balmerino, Barrie, and Logy, rectories and vicarages, and the vicarage-pensionary of Barry, with the teinds, fruits, etc. formerly belonging to the monastery; all which the King incorporates in the free temporal lordship and barony of Balmerino; granting to Elphingstoun the title and honour of a free baron and Lord of Parliament to be called Lord Balmerino, with the right to use suitable arms; the Place of the Abbacy to be the 'principal messuage.' The King, moreover, suppresses the monastery, renounces his right to the Thirds, etc.; ordains that the said lands, etc. shall be taxed not among Church lands, but with barony [lands?] and temporal lordships; and that the said lordship shall be valued and retoured at ten merks of Old and thirty merks of New Extent.

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<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. vi. No. 1049.



The *reddendo* to be the service of one Lord and baron in Parliament, with £100 of blench duty. And the King promises that this infestment shall be ratified in the next Parliament.<sup>1</sup>

On the 3rd and 4th of November 1603, Lord Balmerino enters into a contract with Henry Kinneir, whereby the latter with consent of his wife and his son David, renounces the Abbacy in favour of Lord Balmerino, who, on the other hand, agrees to set in tack to Henry Kinneir during his lifetime the Abbey Place, yards, and orchards, with the cornyards, wood, park, and dove-cot, the overmiln, the eastwood, and fishings; and to present David Kinneir to the church of Auchterhouse, which—probably with a view to this arrangement—had three weeks before been demitted by Alexander Tyrie, ‘parson and vicar thereof,’ into the hands of Lord Balmerino its patron.<sup>2</sup>

On the 18th of February 1604 the King constitutes Robert Auchmouty (son of David Auchmouty advocate in St. Andrews, and in 1593 member of Parliament for that city) ‘Commendator and Abbot of the Abbacy and of the haill spirituality of the same, vacant in his Majesty’s hands by the decease of John Kinneir, or by the rebellion and inhability of Henry Kinneir.’ This charter seems to be inconsistent with that of 20th February 1603 conferring the Abbacy with teinds, etc. on Elphinstoun.<sup>3</sup> On the 14th of May 1605 Robert Auchmouty resigns into the King’s hand the Abbacy, etc. as above, that the King may dispose of it to whomsoever he pleases; and on the same day he resigns the kirks of Balmerino, Barry, and Logy, parsonages and vicarages thereof, that the King may grant the patronage of them to whomsoever he pleases.<sup>4</sup>

Such notices as we have of the later Bailies of the monastery may be here introduced. In May 1587 Commendator Henry Kinneir, in consequence of a decreet-arbitral, made over

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. vi. No. 1411.

<sup>2</sup> *Balmerino Writs.* As regards the right of *property* in the above-mentioned subjects, see Appendix, No. XXVII. § 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Balmerino Writs.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*





to David Setoun of Parbroath the heritable office of the Bailyary of Balmerino—a transaction of which we have no farther account or explanation.<sup>1</sup> In December 1599 John Kinneir, fiar of Kinneir, obtained from the King—in whose hands it was, in virtue of the Annexation Act—a grant of the hereditary Bailyary of all the lands and baronies of the monastery by a charter of which the substance has already been given, but reserving the Bailyary of Barry, which had been granted to Sir James Elphingstoun.<sup>2</sup> In February 1619 David Kinneir, fiar of that Ilk, was served heir of John Kinneir of that Ilk in the office of Bailie of Balmerino; and on the 8th of April of the same year he resigned it, with the teinds of Logie, to Lord Balmerino,<sup>3</sup> with whose family it remained.

As regards the Bailyary of Barry, in 1590 the King made to Patrick Maule of Pannure a heritable gift of this office ‘which had been used and exercised by Sir Thomas Maule of Pannure, knight, and his successors by virtue of the letters of tack made by the Commendators of the Abbacy of Balmerino past memory of man.’<sup>4</sup> In July 1599 the King, as has already been indicated, granted to Sir James Elphingstoun and his heirs male and of tailzie the hereditary office of Bailie of the lands and barony of Barry.<sup>5</sup> This Bailyary was again acquired from Lord Balmerino by the Earl of Pannure in 1667, and was still in that family in the year 1686.

The value of the Bailyary of Balmerino—or the *Regality* of the Abbey—may be inferred from the large sums allowed by Parliament in 1747—when hereditary jurisdictions were abolished—as compensation for the loss of such offices. The Earl of Airlie obtained £1400 for the Bailyary of Arbroath Abbey; and £800 was given for that of Cupar-Angus Abbey.

<sup>1</sup> *Balmerino Writs*.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. vi. No. 981.

<sup>3</sup> *Balmerino Writs*, Thomson's *Retours*.

<sup>4</sup> *Registr. de Pannure*, vol. ii. p. 316.

<sup>5</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. vi. No. 947.



The regality of Dunfermline Abbey was valued at £2,672. That of Balmerino appears not to have been valued, probably as having been forfeited at the rebellion then terminated.

The erection of the Abbacy of Balmerino into a temporal lordship, in favour of Sir James Elphinstoun, was ratified by the Parliament held at Perth in the year 1606. In the Act which was passed on the 9th of July in that year the Estates, after making reference to Sir James's services—first in the King's private affairs, and then as his Secretary and as President of the College of Justice—find and declare that the *temporality*, property and superiority, with the feu-duties, of the Monastery, are in his Majesty's hands by the Annexation Act of 1587; that the *spirituality* of the benefice, containing the Abbey Place and Monastery, with the houses, yards, orchards, and their pertinents, within the precinct of the Abbey, together with the teind sheaves, and other teinds, fruits, rents, and duties, both parsonage and vicarage, of the parish kirks and parochines of Balmerino, Barry, and Logie, and of the vicarage-pensionary of Barry, which come under the general exception from the said Annexation, and which later on pertained to Mr. Robert Auchmouthie, undoubted Commendator of the spirituality of the Abbey, have been resigned by him—'thair being nane of the Convent thair of now on lyfe'—by his letters-patent under the Common Seal of the Abbey into his Majesty's hands; and that the baronies of Kirknewton and Ballerno, with the patronage of Kirknewton, pertain to his Majesty by the Act of Annexation of the Earldom of Gowrie to the Crown in the Parliament of 1600; therefore the Estates of Parliament find it necessary and expedient that the King shall unite the baronies of Kirknewton and Ballerno, and the patronage of Kirknewton, with the Abbacy of Balmerinoch, both spirituality and temporality; that thereafter his Majesty shall erect and incorporate all the above-mentioned baronies, with the teinds of the Kirks of Balmerino, Logy, and Barry, and the patronage of Kirknewton, in one free barony and estate of a temporal lordship



of Parliament; that the same—with such badges and arms as Sir James Elphinstone may think expedient—shall be disposed to him and his heirs-male of tailzie and provision; and that to this effect his Majesty and the Estates of Parliament annul the said general annexation of the kirk lands to the Crown, in so far as it extends to the temporality of Balmerino Abbey. They likewise annul the Act of Annexation of the Earldom of Gowrie to the Crown, in so far as it extends to the baronies of Kirknewton and Ballerno, with the patronage of Kirknewton; and they ordain that an infeftment be made to the effect above stated, remitting and discharging the 'Thirds of the Abbacy, both victual and money; all monks' portions; first year's fruits, and fifth penny of the Abbacy,'<sup>1</sup> because the King will be relieved of the sustentation of the ministers at the foresaid kirks; that Lord Balmerino shall pay all taxes, reckoning the said lordship as £32, 4s. 5d. land of Old Extent;<sup>2</sup> that he shall have relief from the heritable owners and the tacksmen of the lands and teinds; and shall have power to reduce, for reasonable cause according to law, all infeftments, tacks, and titles of any part of the lands, teinds, and other things above specified; 'AND TO THE EFFECT FOIRSAYD, HIS MAJESTIE AND ESTAITTIS OF PARLIAMENT HES SUPPRESSIT AND EXTINGUISCHIT THE MEMORIE OF THE SAID ABBACY OF BALMERINOCHE, THAT THAIR SALL BE NA SUCCESSOUR PROVYDIT THAIRTO, NOR NA FORDER MENTION MAID OF THE SAME IN ONY TYME HEIREFTIR'; reserving to the Crown all regalities and privileges, 'gif ony be,' previously possessed by the Abbots and titulars of Balmerinoch.<sup>3</sup>

On the 20th of December 1607 the King grants to Lord Balmerino a charter under the Great Seal in terms similar

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<sup>1</sup> The 'fifth penny' was a tax imposed on benefices in 1584 (along with the fruits of the first year), for the support of the royal bodyguard. In 1587 both of these imposts were remitted in cases where the holder of the benefice was serving the curé.—(*Acts of Parliament*, vol. iii. pp. 298, 430.)

<sup>2</sup> Another account of the 'Old Extent' of the lordship of Balmerino makes it £24, 4s. 5d.

<sup>3</sup> *Acts of the Parl. of Scotland*, vol. iv. pp. 341-3.



to those of the Act of Parliament; fixing the valuation of the lordship of Balmerino at the former sum of Old Extent, and at £96, 13s. 3d. of New Extent; and ordaining that fit ministers be provided for each of the churches above mentioned, *who shall be nominated by his Majesty*, and have stipends of specified amount paid by Lord Balmerino. The *reddendo* includes £101 of blench duty and the furnishing of Communion elements, and *relieving the severul parish ministers of all taxes* and burdens on the tiends and rents of the churches, or for the repair of the same.<sup>1</sup> In the deed of infeftment, the Abbey Place is appointed to be the principal messuage of the lordship of Balmerino, and the blench duty is fixed at 200 merks.<sup>2</sup>

It is to be observed that the greater part, if not the whole of the lands forming the *temporality* of the Abbacy, in Balmerino parish and elsewhere, having been previously feued, the feuars were not deprived of their possessions by the Act of Parliament, as certain expressions in it might be supposed to imply; and that Lord Balmerino obtained little more than the superiorities or feu-duties. Most of the lands forming the *present* estate of Balmerino were afterwards bought back by the Balmerino family at various periods down to 1702.

In the same year in which the Abbacy of Balmerino was conferred by Act of Parliament on Sir James Elphinstoun there were no fewer than seventeen 'erectiōns' of Church lands into temporal lordships. Regret has often and justly been expressed that the endowments of the old Church were lost to the nation by being thus misappropriated to the aggrandisement of the few. When the Religious houses were suppressed, the intentions of the original donors of their property ought to have been respected. This would have

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<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. vi. No. 2001.

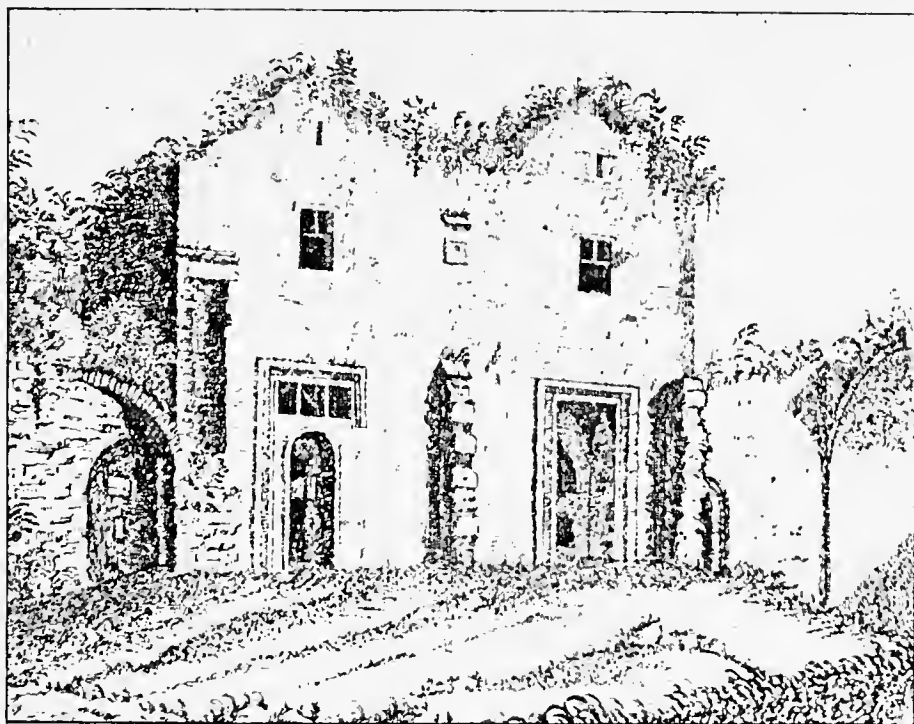
<sup>2</sup> *Balmerino Writs*.



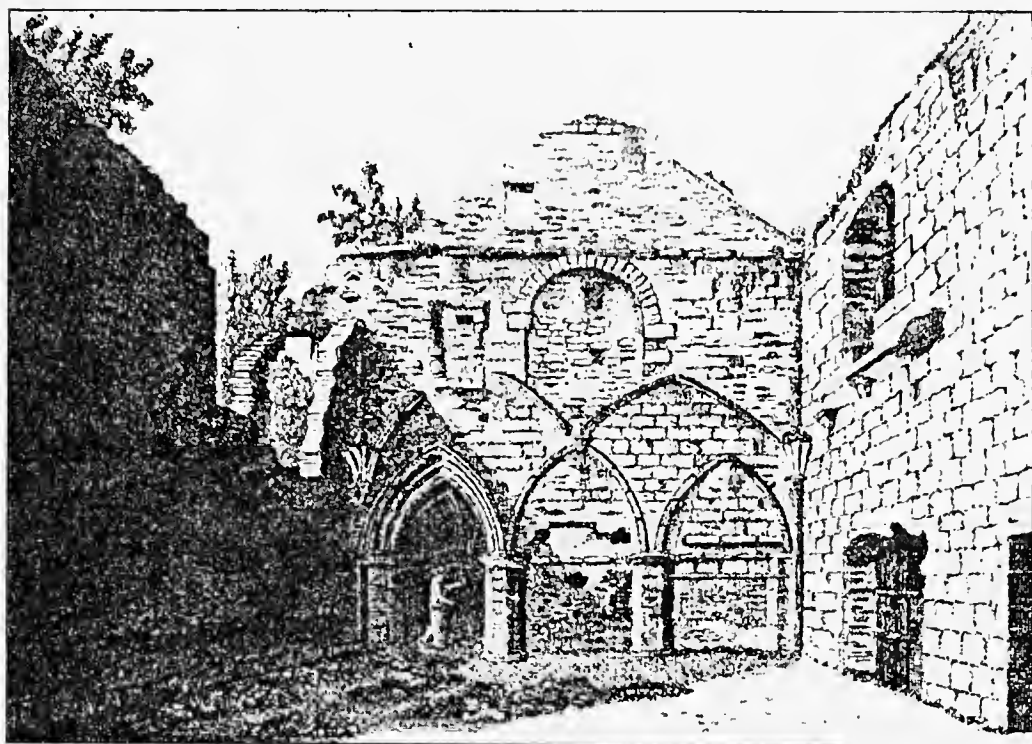


been, though not literally, yet in the changed circumstances substantially done if their revenues had been applied to the three great objects desired by the Reformed Church—the sustentation of the ministry; the endowment of colleges and of burgh and parish schools; and the maintenance of the poor. The Church property was amply sufficient for the carrying out of all these objects on the most liberal scale.





BALMERINO ABBEY. CARDONNEL'S VIEW OF THE EXTERIOR OF THE  
CHAPTER-HOUSE, FROM THE EAST. A.D. 1788.



BALMERINO ABBEY. GROSE'S VIEW OF THE INTERIOR OF THE  
CHAPTER-HOUSE, FROM THE EAST. A.D. 1797.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE ABBEY BUILDINGS AND THEIR EXISTING RUINS

‘Amid the change mere living brings,  
Amid these ruins of the years,  
Here surely one can feel the tears—  
The slow, dumb tears of mortal things.’

—G. W. WOOD.

THERE being no notice of the Abbey buildings in the Char-  
tulary, nor, so far as is known, any contemporary descrip-  
tion of them, the means of determining their original style  
and extent, and the relative position of certain portions  
of them, are now very scanty. The greater part has long  
ago disappeared; but the remains of the Chapter-house, with  
some other fragments, still form a picturesque group. Such  
meagre notices as we have of the architecture of the mon-  
astery were written after it had gone to decay. All tradi-  
tional accounts, however, represent it as a fabric of great  
beauty. Father Hay, in his *Scotia Sacra*, says it was ‘for-  
merly a faire and noble structure.’ Spottiswoode in his *Account  
of the Religious Houses* (A.D. 1734) writes:—‘Balmerinach was  
an Abbey of a beautiful structure . . . which was of old  
a stately building, pleasantly situate near the shore, hard by  
the salt water of Tay, and is now for the most part in ruins.’  
Defoe, the celebrated author of *Robinson Crusoe*, during his  
tour in Scotland in 1727, was induced to visit it, but was  
disappointed with what he saw. ‘I turned,’ he says, ‘to the  
north-east part of the country to see the ruins of the famous  
monastery of Balmerinloch, of which Mr. Cambden takes  
notice, but saw nothing worthy of observation, the very  
ruins being almost eaten up by time.’ In 1760 Pococke,



Bishop of Ossory, a very extensive traveller, came to Balmerino; but his brief notice of the Abbey ruins contains little of interest, and some scarcely excusable errors.<sup>1</sup> Pennant (1769-72) calls it 'a most beautiful Abbey.' Cardonnel (1788) writes of it in similar terms.

The largest and most important of the Abbey buildings was, of course, the great Church of St. Mary and St. Edward, in which the daily services of the monks were performed. I may first advert to the fate of this edifice after the Reformation, which, however, is difficult to trace. Henry Kinneir's charter of the year 1588, which, as we have seen, makes mention of the 'Place on which the Church of the monastery was formerly situated,' might lead us to infer that the Church had before that time been entirely demolished. But the other statement in the same charter, that 'the buildings of the monastery have sustained great damage without any repair' seems rather to indicate that though the Church and other buildings had been despoiled, they were still not incapable of being repaired. The Old Statistical Account of Balmerino, published in 1793, asserts that the Abbey Church 'served as the parish Church till the year 1595, when it was removed to the east side of the den'—the first of which statements we now know to be altogether erroneous. Again, in a letter written by the Rev. Andrew Hutton of Kilmany to General Hutton in 1789, he says:—'In 1611 the Church was translated to about a quarter mile's distance to the eastward, because (it's said) the countess [Lady Balmerino, who was no Countess] could not bear the noise of the Psalms on Sunday.'<sup>2</sup> The translation, however, was only that of St. Ayle's chapel, and was not the result of the *condition* of the Abbey Church. I shall return to this subject.

Thomson, in his *History of Dundee*, states that when the

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<sup>1</sup> Pococke's *Tours in Scotland*, p. 264 (Scot. Hist. Soc.).

<sup>2</sup> See this letter in Appendix, No. XX.





transept of the parish church of that town received a new roof, which, according to him, took place in 1588—forty years after it had been burned by the English—‘the wooden work of the roof of the whole transept was brought from Balmerino, being, in fact, the entire roof of the Abbey Church there, the dimensions of which were about co-extensive with those of the transept.’ (The roof of the Abbey Church was in reality much larger.) He adds, that in 1788–9, when the nave (or Steeple Church) was re-erected, the south transept again received a new roof, and ‘the old oaken roof from Balmerino when taken down was sold. A portion of it was purchased by the late James Guthrie of Craigie, Esq., for the purpose of making gate-posts in several of his fields at Craigie, some of which were to be seen since 1820. A very considerable portion was also purchased by the heritors of Monifieth for the purpose of roofing their old parish church, which was taken down to make way for the erection of the present one in 1812.’<sup>1</sup>

In the New Statistical Account of Monifieth it is stated that ‘a great part of the present church [of Monifieth] is built of the materials of the old Abbey of Balmerino. That edifice was dismantled, and the stones shipped down the Tay, by the second Lord Balmerino [1613–49], for the purpose of repairing the old church of Monifieth: his object being to save expense, as he was the chief heritor in the parish.’

According to these very circumstantial accounts—which, having no means of confirming or disproving them, I give for what they are worth—the old church of Monifieth was once repaired with stones from Balmerino Abbey; and again, after a long interval, with timber from the same source, which for two centuries previously had been doing duty in the roof of the transept of Dundee parish church.

Mr. Maxwell, in his *Old Dundee Prior to the Reformation*,

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<sup>1</sup> Thomson's *History of Dundee*, p. 295.



shows, from the records of the Dundee Burgh Court, that towards the end of the year 1560 the Abbey of Lindores was unroofed, its choicest timber carried off to Dundee, and used in roofing its new Tolbooth—the old one having been burned by the English—and that this ruthless spoliation of Lindores Abbey church was carried out with the concurrence and approval of the Provost, Bailies, and Council. Neither in the work referred to, nor in Mr. Maxwell's other volume, *The History of Old Dundee*, is anything quoted from the Burgh Records referring to the spoliation of Balmerino Abbey, as related by Thomson. But the absence of such notice does not of itself disprove the alleged fact, though Mr. Maxwell shows that the roofing of the transept of the Dundee church took place somewhat later than the date given by the previous historian, and that the whole of that transept was not roofed at the same time.<sup>1</sup> Unless Thomson—or tradition—has confounded Balmerino with Lindores, and also the church of Dundee with its Tolbooth, which seems unlikely, his statements derive some degree of support from the fate of Lindores. The people of Dundee, having already learned to unroof one venerable Abbey Church, would be all the more ready, if allowed by the Commendator of Balmerino, to perpetrate another and similar act of vandalism there.

The Register, recently printed, of the Kirk-Session of St. Andrews, which was also the Court of the Superintendent of Fife, in whose province Balmerino was included, has furnished new information regarding St. Ayle's chapel, which leaves no room for doubt that that edifice was used as the parish church of Balmerino after the Reformation. The chapel is mentioned in a minute of March 1562-3, when certain persons under discipline are ordered by the Superintendent to compeyr in the public essemble of the congregacion of Sanct Talis [Ayle's] kirk'; and from an entry of a similar

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<sup>1</sup> *Old Dundee Prior to the Reformation*, p. 186; *The History of Old Dundee*, p. 251.



kind in the Register under the preceding June, which mentions 'Balmerinaucht parroche kyrk' as the place where certain delinquents were to compare, as well as from other entries, it is clear that these two designations denoted the same edifice.<sup>1</sup>

It thus appears that the Abbey Church—in whatever state it was left by the reforming mob—was not used for Protestant worship, but that St. Ayle's chapel, which two centuries before had been practically, though not formally, constituted the parish church of Balmerino, continued to be so used after the Reformation. Moreover, the parish itself is, in a minute of St. Andrews Kirk-Session of the year 1568, several times called 'Sant Teal parrochion.'<sup>2</sup>

On the whole it appears probable that the Abbey Church may have stood for a considerable period after the visit of the Reformers in 1559; and though its internal decorations had been destroyed, it may still have retained, like that of Lindores, its roof unimpaired. Even if the timber of this portion of it was not removed by spoilers from Dundee, it would in course of time fall into decay from natural causes, and the ruin of the walls would thus be accelerated. The same result would happen in the case of the other buildings of the monastery. As the Abbey Church was not required—or at least was not used—for Protestant worship, and the domestic portions of the structure were probably no longer occupied by the monks; and as the revolution which had taken place in the religious faith of the parishioners had doubtless destroyed their reverence for both Church and Monastery, so none of them had any interest—apart from the love of Art, which was at that period extinguished by a different class of ideas—in preventing the decay of the buildings. Least of all were the Commendators, who had got possession of the Abbey property, desirous

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<sup>1</sup> *Register of St. Andrews Kirk-Session*, pp. 146, 182 (Scot. Hist. Society).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 300.



to uphold them. Their doubtful right to enjoy such property would not be strengthened by the preservation of a great and beautiful Church, the existence of which, if another revolution should ever take place, might help to bring about the restoration of their lands to a religious use. Being thus uncared for, the buildings eventually became a quarry for the neighbourhood; and many carved stones which once adorned the Abbey walls may still be seen in the houses, and even the fences, around Balmerino. Now, however, the ruins are most carefully preserved.

Referring the reader to the account of the general plan and component parts of a Cistercian monastery given in a previous Chapter, I shall now briefly describe the existing ruins of the Abbey, and indicate the probable situation or arrangement of those portions of the fabric which have altogether disappeared.

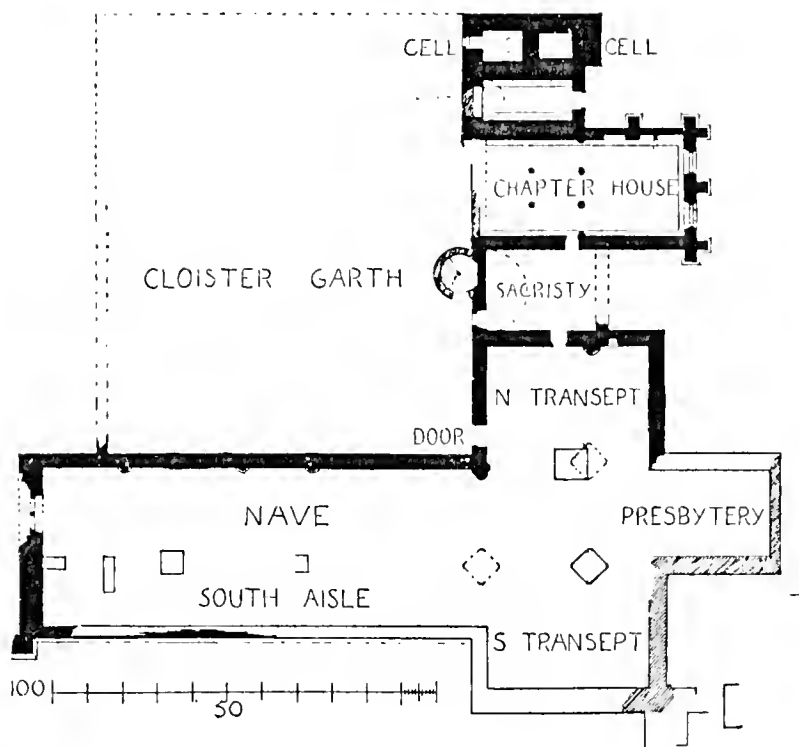
The spacious Church, which had its ornate pillars, arches, doorways and windows, and richly carved woodwork, is, with the exception of a few remnants, no longer in existence; and the spot where was heard by day and night for centuries the solemn chanting of Psalms and medieval hymns by white-robed monks, and over which there passed many a stately procession, while the strains of the organ pealed through 'long-drawn aisles,' is now marked only by trees and heaps of grass-covered rubbish.

‘No matins now, no vespers sung,  
Time mocks at last the human tongue.’

The Church was in the form of a Latin cross, of which, as was usual in such structures, the head was the east end. A few years ago all that was visible consisted of the north and west walls of the north Transept, and the north wall of the Nave, to the height of from 5 to 15 feet, with small fragments of the west front. A ground-plan of the ruins, given in the volume containing the Abbey Chartulary by Turnbull its







BALMERINO ABBEY. GROUND-PLAN.



editor, and printed in 1841, places a row of pillars along the central line of the Church from east to west, thus dividing the Presbytery and Nave longitudinally into two arcades of equal width. For this arrangement it is now certain that there is no authority. Another ground-plan, published in 1884 by Mr. George Shaw Aitken in his tastefully executed work, *The Abbeys of Arbroath, Balmerino, and Lindores, Illustrated and Described*, assigns to the Nave both a north and a south aisle—Mr. Aitken having been misled by local information, which then seemed to be perfectly trustworthy but has since proved to be erroneous, to the effect that a row of pillars that had, about the year 1831, been removed, had stood in what is now known to have been really the line of the south wall of the Nave; and he naturally concluded that the Nave must have been considerably wider than it actually was, and that it must have had two aisles. In 1896 the present writer, with a view to the preparation of an accurate ground-plan of the Church—which till that time had been impossible—was allowed by the proprietor to make excavations by which the desired object was in a great measure attained. The information thus acquired, which showed, among other things, that the Nave had only a south aisle, has been turned to good account by Messrs. Macgibbon and Ross in the second volume of their splendid work, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland*, which gives a ground-plan of the Church as complete as can be made till the site is cleared of the rubbish and trees which doubtless conceal many interesting details.

The architecture of the Church was in the First-pointed style of Gothic. The length of the Nave was about 127 feet, its width about 45 feet; length of the Presbytery or eastern section of the cross, which had no aisle, about 33 feet, its width about 25 feet; length along the Transepts about 98 feet; width of the Transepts about 46 feet—all these being the interior dimensions. The whole length of the Church was about 206 feet within the walls; being 10 feet longer than



St. Giles's, Edinburgh, 4 feet shorter than Dunblane Cathedral, and 7 feet shorter than the Church of Lindores Abbey.

Only three of the vaulting shafts of the Nave are at present visible against its north wall. Irregularity in their situation, as well as in that of several foundations of piers or other erections in the Nave, cannot, in the present state of the ground, be satisfactorily explained; but there is sufficient reason to conclude that the bays of the Nave were six in number. Spaces in its western portion were probably set apart for the lay-brothers, and, at first, for other parishioners. Of the four great piers of the crossing, which doubtless supported a central Tower, the foundations of three have been laid bare—the two eastern ones, and the north-west one at the junction of the Nave and the north Transept. The Transepts had each an eastern aisle of probably two bays. The moulded base of a respond may still be seen attached to the north wall of the north Transept, which indicates the relative position of the piers of both Transepts.

The principal doorway of the Church was in the west front of the Nave, facing the central line of the chief arcade. It was a double doorway with a central pillar. There was another doorway in the west wall of the north Transept, and a third, round-headed, in the north wall of the same. The south-west corner of the Nave, from which the rubbish has been removed, is of beautiful workmanship, with an angle buttress. Foundations of various structures, the purpose of which is uncertain, have been laid bare at the south-east corners of the south Transept and Presbytery. The rubbish covering the site of the Church abounds with oyster shells which, as in other ancient buildings, were embedded in the mortar of its walls, between the courses of the stones.

Before we leave the Church it will be proper to advert to an incident connected with the removal of its remains at a period comparatively recent. The writer of the article on Balmerino in *Chambers's Gazetteer of Scotland*, published in



1832, referring to the Abbey ruins, says:—‘Recently much of the rubbish has been cleared off for the useful purpose of building drains and park dykes; among other desecrations, the site of the *magnum altare* (high altar) has been trenched, and the bones of Queen Emergarde dispersed as curiosities through the country.’ The following account of the same matter was received many years ago by the present writer in a letter from a person of intelligence now deceased:—‘Being at Balmerino on the evening of the day on which a stone coffin was discovered in the ruins of the Abbey, I went along with Mr. William Jack, farmer, Demons, to see it. It had been cut out of one white freestone, and very neatly executed, exactly the shape of the body, and covered over with a free-stone slab, which was then lying about in broken pieces. It was found near the east wall, and, I think, about the middle of the ruin. It was of moderate size, about the length of an ordinary-sized female. The bones were lying in a heap. I brought off a thigh-bone, and Mr. Jack took the skull, which was in a wonderfully good state of preservation, and sent it to Dr. Small, the antiquarian, who was then living at Abernethy. This was, so far as I can remember, in the summer of the year 1831 or 1832. The coffin was generally supposed to be that of Queen Emergarde, and, I believe, was broken down by Mrs. Mitchell (the farmer’s wife) for sand to her kitchen floor. It was discovered by Mr. Mitchell’s servants when carting away the lime rubbish and earth for manure.’ From these statements it appears not improbable that the stone coffin may have been that of the Foundress of the Abbey, who, according to Spottiswoode, was interred before the high altar. Certainty on the question, however, cannot be attained till it be seen what a thorough clearing away of the rubbish may reveal. In any case, only a person of distinction would have been buried in that part of the Church. Mr. Mitchell is said to have also carted away to St. Andrews, where he was building a house, a great quantity of hewn stones from





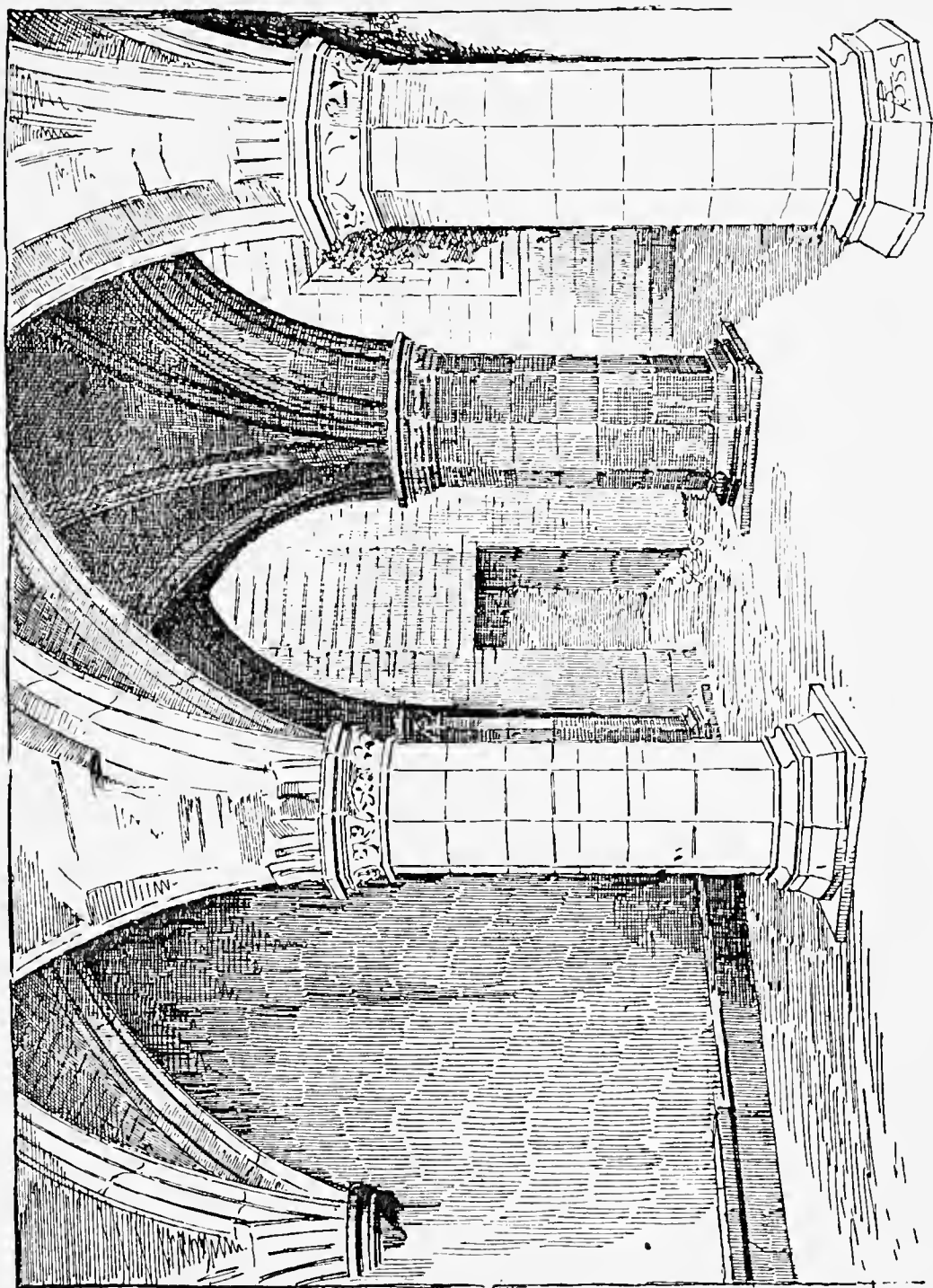
the piers and south wall of the Church, till compelled by the proprietor's ground-officer to discontinue his operations. The ground on which stood the most easterly portion of the Church, whether trenched or not, appears to have been either then or afterwards subjected to the plough, which, however, did not penetrate to the foundations recently disclosed.

As already stated, the Cloister Garth or quadrangle, around three of whose sides were ranged most of the other buildings of the monastery, was usually on the south side of the Nave of the Church; but at Balmerino, as at Melrose, it was on the north side. Only the structures which formed the east side of the Garth now remain.

Adjoining the north Transept of the Church, and connected with it by the doorway already mentioned, is an apartment about  $32\frac{1}{2}$  feet in length from west to east, and 18 feet in breadth, having a barrel-vaulted roof, and stone benches along its north and south walls. The east wall is almost wholly gone. This was probably the Sacristy, which in Cistercian monasteries usually occupied that situation.

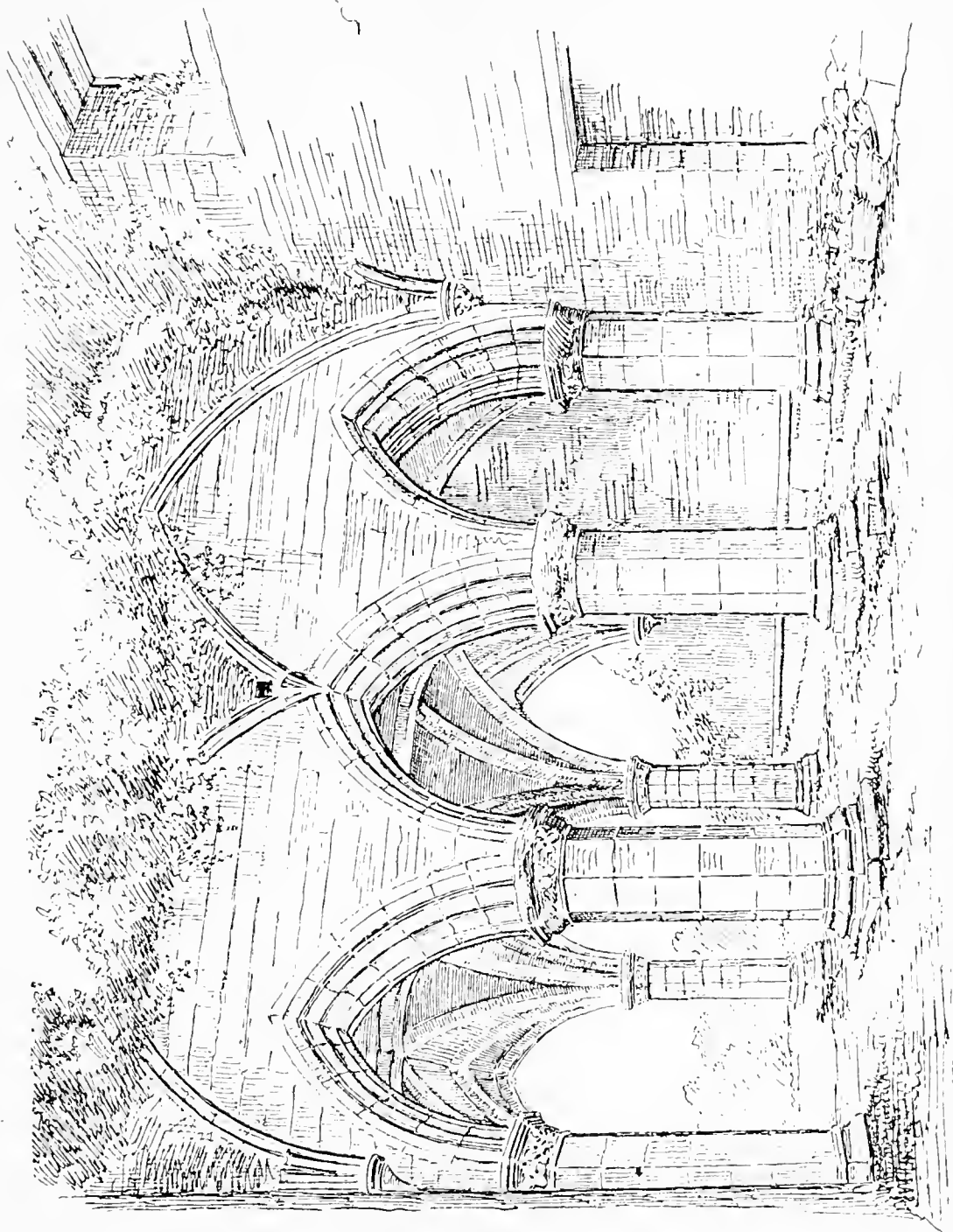
A small doorway—not original—in the north wall of this chamber leads into the Chapter-house. This is now the most entire and interesting part of the ruins, and awakens in the mind of the visitor keen regret that so few of the Abbey buildings have been preserved. The Chapter-house consists of two distinct portions, different in style and age, but of similar dimensions, each being about 28 feet square. The western compartment is divided by pillars into three arcades of equal width extending from west to east—the usual arrangement in Cistercian Chapter-houses. There now remain only four isolated pillars and the two responds placed against the walls in a line with the eastern pillars. The other two pillars have no responds, there being in the north and south walls only rounded corbels from which the vaulting springs. These pillars are more slender than the eastern ones. All of them are octagonal, having moulded bases, and capitals ornamented with leaves of





BALMERINO ABBEY. CHAPTER-HOUSE, FROM SOUTH-WEST.





BALMERINO ABBEY. INTERIOR OF CHAPTER-HOUSE, FROM SOUTH-EAST.



plants, which are different on each pillar, some of them being still very perfect. The vaulting is groined, and one of the three bosses contains armorial bearings which are almost effaced. The compartment is incomplete at its west end, where the vaulting is gone, and a pillar attached to the south wall is said to have fallen between the years 1782 and 1789. Of the three arched openings which doubtless formed the west front the middle one would be the doorway, and the two side ones windows unglazed, the Cistercian practice being, as we have seen—at least in earlier times—to have all these open. Stone benches were placed along the walls, but the one at the south wall has disappeared. Masons' marks are still visible on the pillars, as well as on some of the remaining fragments of the Church.

The eastern portion of the Chapter-house also had a groined roof, which was considerably higher than that of the western compartment. The roof was supported by a central pillar as in the still existing Chapter-houses of the Cistercian Abbey of Glenluce in Wigtonshire, the Cluniac Abbey of Crossraguel in Ayrshire, and the Cathedrals of Glasgow and Elgin. The beauty of the vaulting may be inferred from that of the corbels and portions of the ribs still attached to the wall, the lines of which are as sharply defined as when they left the workmen's hands. In the east wall were two square-headed windows. The Abbot's seat was doubtless placed against the middle of the east wall, between these windows. The stone benches which were placed along the three walls, as in the two of the western compartment, have been removed, as well as the external buttresses of the walls, of which buttresses only the bases remain.

If a Chapter-house was built when the Abbey was founded, it could not have been either of these compartments with their present architectural features, which are of the Decorated style. The existing western chamber in all probability constituted the Chapter-house for a considerable period before the eastern one was erected. When that event took place, the





older compartment, with the necessary alterations on its east wall, may have served as a vestibule to the new one. There is an example of this at St. Andrews Priory, where the original Chapter-house was at a subsequent period superseded by a later one, to which it thenceforth probably served as a vestibule.

The present condition of the eastern compartment shows that it had been converted into a dwelling-house, possibly by some of the Commendators, but more probably by the first Lord Balmerino for himself or his servants. The beautifully groined vaulting and the central pillar were demolished, and a wooden floor for an upper chamber inserted; the window nearest to the south wall was changed into a round-headed doorway surmounted by a window of three square-headed lights; a circular stair was built in the south-east corner; recesses were made in the north wall; on the west side, at the northern arches, two fireplaces were constructed, the flues of which pierce the vaulting; the small square-headed windows in the upper part of the north and east walls were probably then inserted. At the same period the Sacristy was converted into a kitchen and brewhouse with a vent to each—the oven being still entire in 1787, as stated in Mr. Hutton's letter already quoted; the large doorway leading into the north transept of the Church was partly blocked with masonry; and the present small doorway for access from the Chapter-house was made through the north wall of the Sacristy. The view of the interior of the Chapter-house, from the east, contained in the second volume of Grose's *Antiquities of Scotland*, published in 1797, represents one of the two archways, where the fireplaces had been constructed, as at that period closed with masonry, and the other one as open. Both this view and another, given in Cardonnel's *Picturesque Antiquities of Scotland*, published in 1793, seem to indicate that the east and west walls of the Chapter-house were then higher than they now are, and that it had a roof sloping from a central ridge.

Adjoining the Chapter-house, on its north side, is a barrel-



vaulted apartment, having a pointed doorway in its east wall, and stone benches against its north and south walls. If the apartment on the south side of the Chapter-house was the Sacristy, this must have been the Slype, or passage from the Cloister Garth to the precincts. There appears to have been another doorway in its west wall, which is now patched up with masonry, the jambs having been first torn away. In Mr. Hutton's time cattle were housed here. In Turnbull's Plan this apartment is called the Fraternity, or day-room of the monks, but its small dimensions—about 25½ feet by 11½—and want of windows, refute such a supposition.

Immediately north of the Slype are three cells, two of which have entrances only by hatchways in their vaulted roofs. Beneath one of these is the third cell, or cellar, also vaulted, having an entrance in its west wall reached by a descent of four steps from the ground outside of it. The two former, or at least the eastern one, whose floor is on the ground level, were probably penitentiaries, or places of imprisonment for refractory monks, with which it is known that Cistercian monasteries were provided. The eastern cell has a stone bench on each side, and its floor is 9 feet 8 inches in length by 6 feet 8 inches in width. Its height is about 14 feet, and it has two small openings in the walls for light. In the north and south walls, about half-way between the floor and the roof, there are holes for timber joists, which show that it was divided at one time—probably after the Reformation—into an upper and lower apartment. In the north wall there is a recess, where latterly there may have been a doorway, and a thin new wall has been built outside of the vacant space.

Over the several apartments now described, forming the eastern side of the Cloister Garth, there was doubtless a second story, containing the Scriptorium, or writing and Library, above the older Chapter-house,<sup>1</sup> and also a passage leading from

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<sup>1</sup> At Crossraguel Abbey the windows of the Scriptorium and Library still exist.



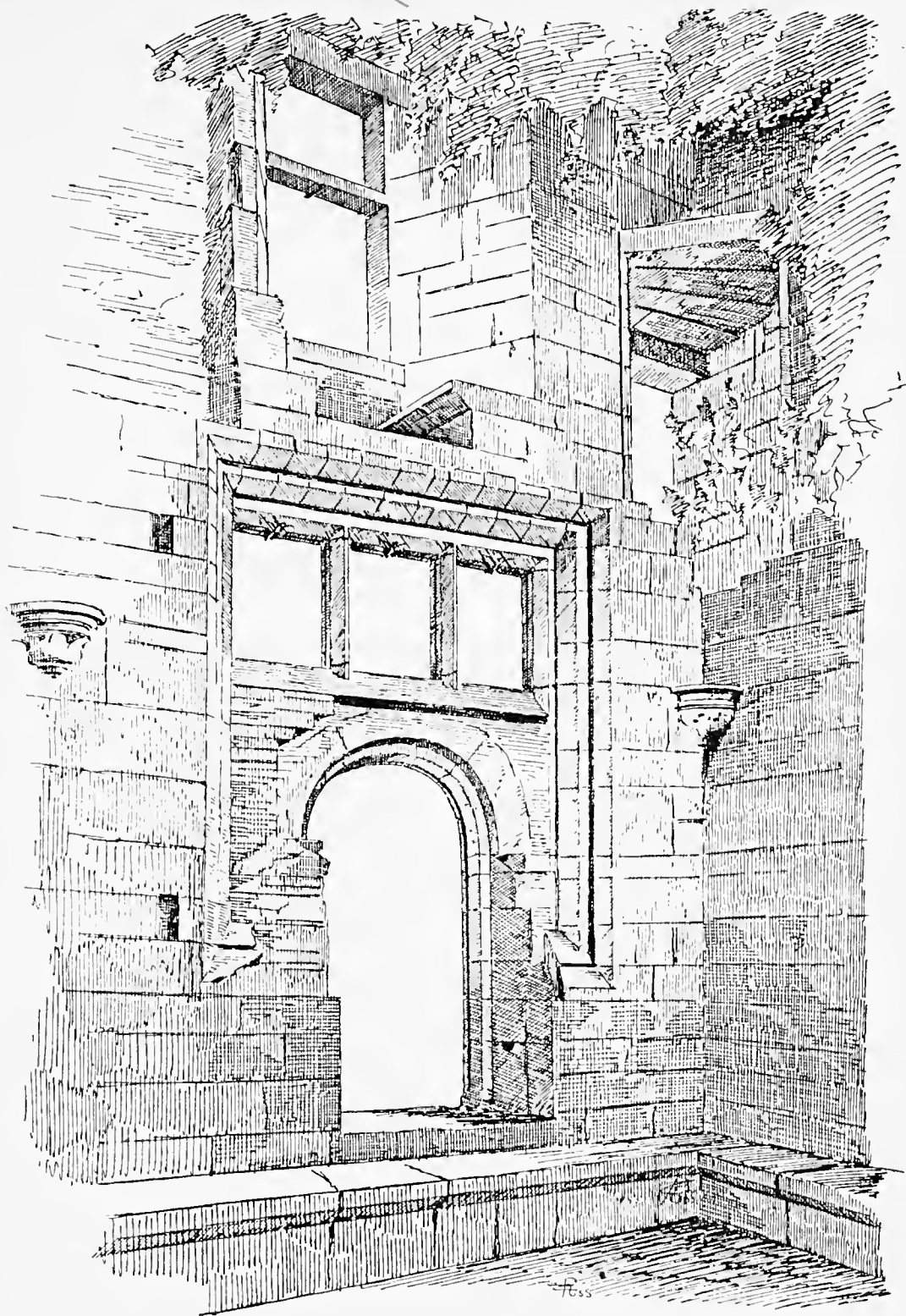
the monks' Dormitory to the north Transept of the Church, through a doorway in the north wall of the latter, and thence down to the floor of the Transept by a broad stair, by which the monks went to the night services.

The arrangement of the buildings which formed the north and west sides of the Cloister Garth is now only matter of conjecture, though there is reason to believe that the foundations of a great part of them still remain underground. Cistercian usages, as we have seen, would lead us to expect the Fraternity, with the monks' Dormitory over it, to have been situated next to the Slype, or to the cells just mentioned; the Kitchen to have been west of the Fraternity; and the Refectory, or dining-hall, west of the Kitchen. Though, in Cistercian monasteries, both the Refectory and the Fraternity usually stood with their axis at right angles to the north (or south) walk of the Cloister Garth, yet at Newbotle—a Cistercian house—and probably in *Scottish* monasteries of all Orders, the Refectory had its axis parallel to one of these sides of the quadrangle. Near the Refectory, cellars for the storage of provisions would be provided.

On the west side of the Cloister Garth was doubtless situated the long building called *Domus Conversorum*—the house of the converts or lay-brothers—with their Dormitory over it. It would probably be connected with the western part of the Nave of the Church by a doorway, through which they would go to such of the services as they had to attend. About seventy years ago, near the situation of the present farmhouse, there was a monastic building of considerable size and height, which was then used as a stable. This may have been the house of the lay-brothers.

About 30 yards east of the Chapter-house there stood in the first quarter of the present century a detached Mansion of two stories in which the Lords Balmerino had dwelt. Old charters, of a date subsequent to the Reformation, mention as existing in the same place a building then called the





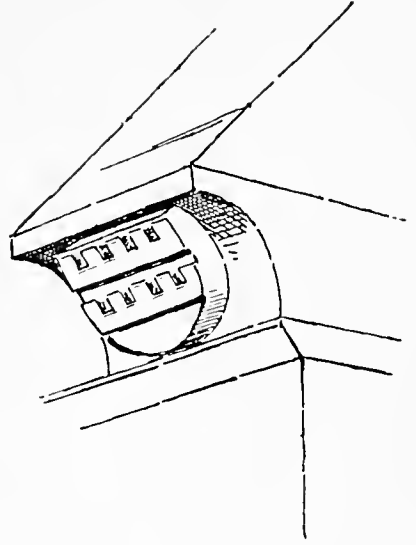
BALMERINO ABBEY. SOUTH-EAST ANGLE OF CHAPTER-HOUSE.



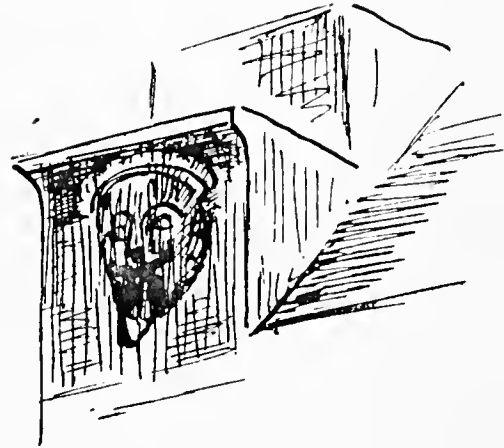
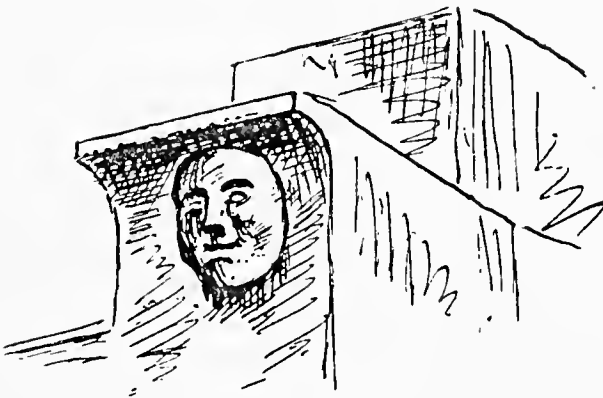




BALMERINO ABBEY. CARVED STONE  
NOW IN FARM BUILDING.



ARMS ON SKEW PUTT OF BARN  
OR GRANARY.



TWO FIGURES ON A DOVECOT AT RAVENSBY, BARRY, WHICH  
BELONGED TO BALMERINO ABBEY.



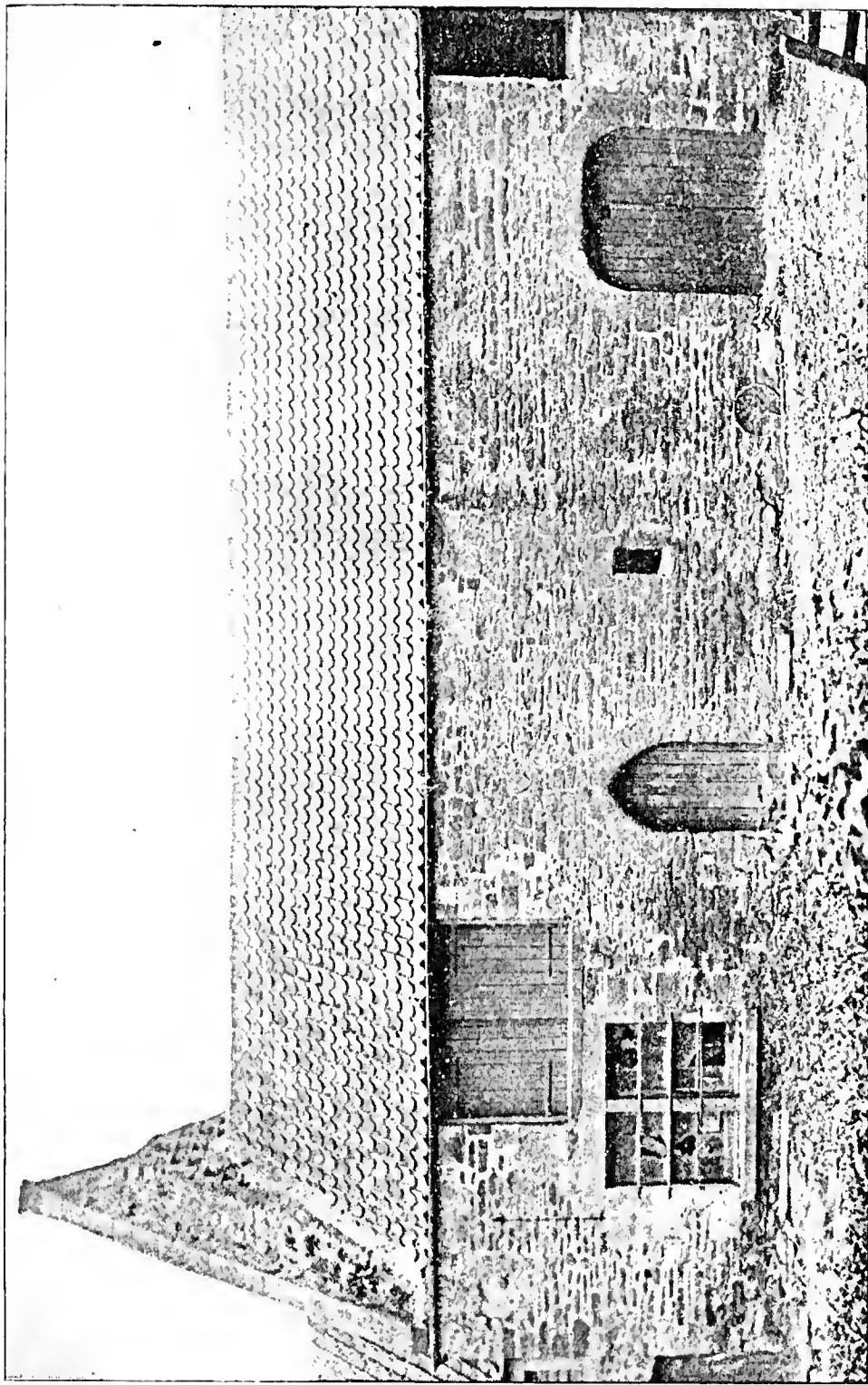
Commendator's house, from which it is evident that the two were one and the same edifice. This had doubtless been originally the residence of the Abbot. Its front faced the west. It had three doors—one in its front, approached by a stair; another on its east side leading to a garden attached to it; of the third—the kitchen door—the situation is uncertain. The house was built of 'fine hewn stones' according to my informant who had seen it. 'Two stone windows in the front,' says Mr. Hutton in the letter already referred to, 'have the impression of arms on them; and on the north end there is a bartizan, as they call it, looking towards the river.' Either the bartizan or the house itself was covered or roofed with lead. In 1789 the farmer at Balmerino lived in part of this house. It was afterwards abandoned, and the farmer occupied a house of one story which stood where the farm stables now are. The only surviving portion of the Abbot's house is a cellar popularly called 'Lord Balmerino's wine-cellar.' It has a vaulted roof of good masonry, an aperture in its east wall near the roof, in its west side a window of two lights, and what was probably the opening into a staircase. It measures about 18 feet by 16 feet. The round arch of its doorway is formed of only two stones, and there are remains of an extension of the cellarage northwards. It was probably from one of the windows of the Abbot's house that the stone, showing a coat of arms, was taken which has been built into the west gable of one of the farm buildings, close to the public road. Its upper part bears a small cross with the word DEUS (God) beneath it. Below this is a shield containing a chevron; but the rest of the blazon has been effaced by the insertion in it of a modern date, 1849. On the right side of the shield are the letters  $\frac{A}{I}$ , and on the left  $\frac{P}{O}$ . The situation of the *Hospitium* or Guest-house, and of the Infirmary—indispensable parts of every Cistercian monastery—is unknown.



North of the Cloister Garth there was apparently another court, which was entered from the west by a large arched gateway, having a small one either on each, or on one of its sides. According to some accounts, there was also an arched gateway at the east end of the inclosure. These gateways were removed in the early part of this century. On the north side of the western entrance was the large granary or 'girnle' which still exists, distinguished by its thick walls, high-pointed gable which contained a dove-cot and two arched doorways, one of these being pointed, and its arch formed of two stones. The modern alterations in the south wall of this building can be easily recognised. The skew at the north-west corner of the gable contains a coat of arms 'two bars embattled'—probably those of the Abbot who erected it; but even the most learned in the science of heraldry have not yet found any coat identical with it. The granary appears to have formed part of the original Abbey Grange.

A few years ago a mutilated effigy was taken out of the west face of Balmerino Pier, into which it had long previously been inserted. It is the figure of a man in armour, but wanting the head, arms, and limbs. The hoop-like plates on the back of the tunic, and some chain-work at the neck, may still be discerned. Another headless figure—of an ecclesiastic according to some, of a woman in the opinion of most ladies who have seen it—was recently dug up near the ruins. The drapery, which is well executed, is uninjured. These two figures, which have been placed beside each other on the sward east of the Chapter-house, were both of them intended to stand erect—the backs being as carefully carved as the fronts. They are nearly equal in size, and may have been effigies of the Blessed Virgin and St. Edward the Confessor, to both of whom the Abbey was dedicated; or of Queen Ermengarde and her husband King William the Lion. Sibbald states that Ermengarde's 'statue' was at the Abbey 'within these few years'—that is, about two centuries ago.





BALMERINO ABBEY: ANCIENT BARN OR GRANARY. (*The square openings on the left are modern.*)





The mutilated condition of the two figures just described suggests to the mind a picture of the reforming mob in 1559 tearing down the ornaments, and smashing the ‘monuments of idolatry’ in the beautiful Abbey Church. Towards the end of last century an image of the Virgin with the Holy Child in her arms was dug out of the ruins, and given to Mr. David Martin, ‘painter and antiquarian.’ It was said to have stood in a niche above two basins cut out of the stone benches near the entrance of some apartment of the Abbey [the doorway leading from the Sacristy into the north Transept of the Church] ‘probably for holding holy water.’<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1860, when workmen were digging a foundation for new farm-buildings near the Abbey, they found a good specimen of the English gold coin called an *angel*, having on the obverse the figure of the archangel Michael piercing the dragon with a spear. On the same side was the inscription—HENRIC . DE . GRA . REX . AGLI . Z . FRANC . Translation—*Henry by the grace of God King of England and France*. On the reverse was a cross surmounting a ship as its mast, and the legend—PER . CRUC . TUA . SALVA . NOS . X . PE . REDE . Translation—*By Thy cross save us, O Christ, Redeemer of sinners*. On the right side of the cross was H for Henry. The arms were those of France quartered with the arms of England; and the coin appeared to be of the reign either of Henry VI. (1422–61) or of Henry VII. (1485–1509).

The situation of several portions of ground, and of buildings around the Abbey, some of which have been mentioned in a previous Chapter, may now be indicated. The cemetery, or, as it is described in a charter of the year 1619, ‘the waste land lying to the Abbey kirk called the Convent’s kirkyard,’ was immediately south of the Church. Extending from east to west, across the middle of the field adjoining this cemetery on the south, may still be seen a ridge slightly elevated above the ground on either side of it. It marks the

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<sup>1</sup> O. S. A.

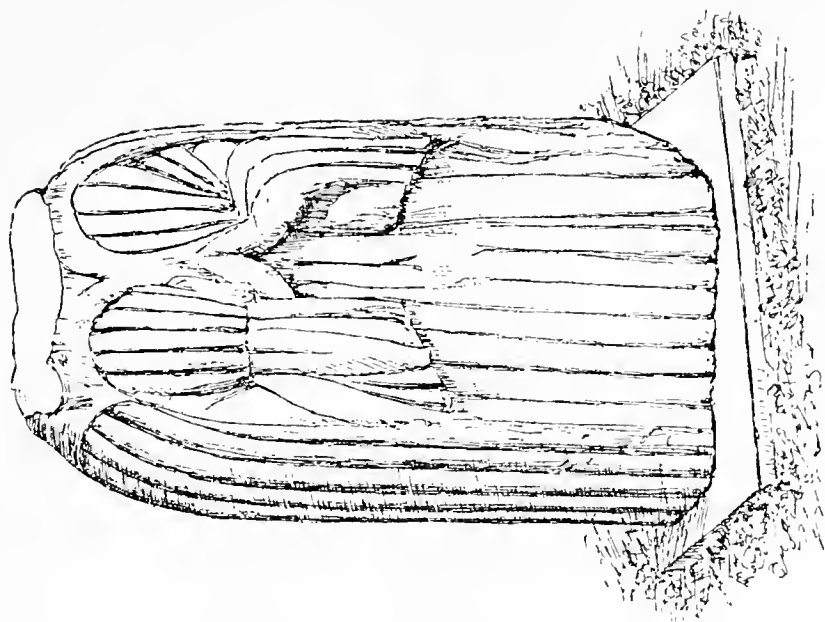


site of a portion of the wall which enclosed the Abbey precincts. At both ends of this ridge the wall turned northwards. On the west, it extended along the east side of the public road towards the Abbey Grange. The Abbey Gateway must have been somewhere in this wall, if it was not identical with the gateway already described. On the east, the wall appears to have followed at first the course of the stream till it reached the edge of the ravine, and thence was continued along its western crest. Within this boundary wall, and south and east of the cemetery, were the garden and orchard of the monastery, where, seventy or eighty years ago, many large fruit and other trees were growing.

South of the ridge and wall now described, and extending westward to the road, were the 'overyards,' which seem to have been identical with the ground called in 1619 'the arable yards of Balmerinoch estimate to four acres.' It is probable that these were the private gardens of the monks, for their possession of which they were taken to task, as we have seen, in the year 1533. East of these 'overyards,' apparently, was the 'orchard or fruityard called Heriot's or Barrett's(?) yard' (which seems to have been distinct from the orchard already mentioned), 'with the walls and ruinous houses adjacent thereto called the Brunt Gernel'—doubtless one of the buildings burnt by the English Admiral's force in the year 1547, and never repaired.

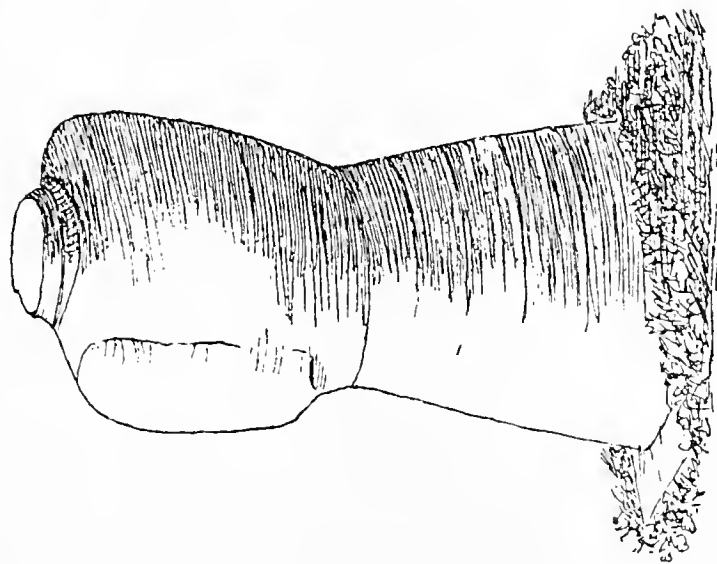
In the ravine or 'den' east of the Abbey were the 'ward' (that is, enclosure) 'and nutyard,' and also the 'Overmiln' (near the dam of which is the 'Wards well' or Monks' Well). North of the Overmiln was the Nethermiln, at a little distance south of the present miln, but on the west side of the burn. All the grain to be ground into meal, raised on the Abbey lands in this parish, had to be brought to these milns. Water for the Nethermiln was carried from the stream flowing past Byres by a lade along the middle of the west slope of the ravine, while the burn which flows past Bottomeraig supplied





EFFIGY.

FOUND AT BALMERINO ABBEY.



EFFIGY IN ARMOUR.



the Overmiln. Both were meal milns. Near the Nethermiln was a brewhouse. (The Abbey itself was probably supplied with water from the 'Ladewells' in the face of the hill to the south of it.) The road from Kirkton to Balmerino after crossing the burn (the bridge over which was not erected till about a hundred years ago) turned northwards, and led down the west side of the burn to the Nethermiln; and the present road between the two rows of houses standing west of the bridge did not then exist.

On the knoll south of the Nethermiln, and west of the lade which supplied it, stood the large 'Dovecot of Balmerino.' North of the existing Abbey granary, and near the site of the present stackyard, stood the 'Malt-kiln and barn,' to which the 'ward and nutyard' already mentioned are described as being 'adjacent.' The Nethermiln, dovecot, malt-kiln, and barn were in existence about seventy years ago.

West of the Abbey, and of the road leading from Balmerino to Byres, was situated the 'Green of Balmerino, with the plumyard, within ane stone dyke,' which was occupied after the Reformation by John Yester, the *quondam* monk. The 'Green' was probably used for 'weapon-shawings,' and still existed in 1723. The 'Butts' at Byres are mentioned in 1695, and were evidently an old name then. So early as the reigns of James III. and IV. Parliament enacted that neither football nor golf, nor other sports unprofitable for the defence of the realm be practised, but that shooting (archery) be used, and bow-marks made in every parish, which doubtless explains the existence of these 'Butts' at Byres. The Green and plumyard were probably identical with a field which in the early part of this century was bounded on the east, south, and west sides by a 'dyke' or wall of considerable height. The east wall occupied the site of the present hedgerow on the west side of the public road leading to Byres. The north half of the field thus enclosed contained many fine old trees, the last of which—a plane—was cut down about the year 1863.





A few old trees near the Abbey are worthy of special mention. (1) A Spanish chestnut tree on the east side of the Abbot's house, and close to it, has by some been thought to be as old as the Abbey; but this is probably an over-estimate. At a foot from the ground it measures  $19\frac{1}{2}$  feet in circumference; at four feet from the ground  $15\frac{1}{2}$  feet. In 1793, as appears from the Old Statistical Account, it measured—at what height it is not stated—15 feet in girth. Its length of trunk is only about 5 feet. Some decayed parts, where a limb seems to have been broken off, were formerly covered with zinc plates, and now are carefully closed with cement to exclude the weather. The venerable patriarch is still, however, in a healthy and vigorous condition:—

‘The spring  
Finds thee not less alive to her sweet force  
Than yonder upstarts of the neighbouring wood,  
So much thy juniors, who their birth received  
Half a millennium since the date of thine.’

(2) A very large walnut tree. (3) Another old Spanish chestnut farther south. (4) Two very large beech trees, one of which has a circumference of 15 feet above the spreading out of the roots. The other was greatly damaged during the tremendous storm of 17th November 1893, which proved so disastrous throughout Scotland. In 1775 Lord Hailes thus wrote to James Boswell, the biographer of Dr. Johnson:—‘The gentleman at St. Andrews who said that there were but two trees in Fife ought to have added, that the elms of Balmerino were sold within these twenty years to make pumps for the fire-engines.’<sup>1</sup> This statement shows that the trees of Balmerino were already celebrated for their size before wood was plentiful in Fife—at least in its eastern parts.

The thoughtful reader who has perused the foregoing narrative may feel disposed to agree with the sentiments

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<sup>1</sup> Croker's ed. of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, vol. iii. p. 100 (ed. 1831).





ANCIENT SPANISH CHESTNUT TREE AT BALMERINO ABBEY.  
(TAKEN IN WINTER.)



of Wordsworth, whose *Ecclesiastical Sonnets* have been quoted in it so frequently in reference to Monks and Abbeys:—

‘ Monastic Domes ! following my downward way,  
Untouched by due regret I marked your fall !  
Now, ruin, beauty, ancient stillness, all  
Dispose to judgments temperate as we lay  
On our past selves in life’s declining day ;  
For as, by discipline of Time made wise,  
We learn to tolerate the infirmities  
And faults of others—gently as he may,  
So with our own the mild Instructor deals,  
Teaching us to forget them or forgive.  
Perversely curious, then, for hidden ill,  
Why should we break Time’s charitable seals ?  
Once ye were holy, ye are holy still ;  
Your spirit freely let me drink, and live !’



PART III

HISTORY OF THE PROTESTANT MINISTERS  
AND PEOPLE





## CHAPTER I

THE REFORMED CHURCH; MR. ARCHIBALD KEITH,  
MR. PATRICK AUCHINLECK

‘ With what entire affection do they prize  
Their Church reformed ! labouring with earnest care  
To baffle all that may her strength impair ;  
That Church the unpverted Gospel’s seat ;  
In their afflictions a divine retreat ;  
Source of their liveliest hope, and tenderest prayer.’

—WORDSWORTH.

As an introduction to this portion of our History, and as a help towards a right understanding of many of its incidents, it will be proper to give a brief account of the ecclesiastical system which displaced Romanism, and thenceforth regulated Church life in Balmerino, as in every other Scottish parish.

The aim of the Reformers—however imperfectly realized—was ‘ that the reverent face of the primitive and apostolic Church should be reduced agane to the eyes and knowledge of men.’<sup>1</sup>

The principles of the desired reformation may be said to have attained supremacy in Scotland in 1560. In July of that year a Committee of the Estates nominated eight Protestant ministers for the chief towns; and of these John Knox was restored to the charge which he had formerly held in Edinburgh. About the same time five other preachers were appointed to superintend the religious condition of as many large districts of the country. On the 17th of August Parliament approved and ratified the Confession of Faith—an admirable exposition of Protestant theology—submitted to it at its request by Knox and other five ministers. Eight

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<sup>1</sup> *Laing’s Edition of Knox’s Works*, vol. ii. p. 264.



days later, Parliament abolished the jurisdiction of the Pope within the realm; repealed all statutes which sanctioned Roman doctrines and rites; and prohibited the celebration of, or attendance at mass under the penalty of confiscation of goods for the first offence, banishment for the second, and, for the third, death, though the last of these punishments, at least, does not appear to have ever been inflicted. These Acts, however, as Queen Mary refused to ratify them, were not recorded among the Parliamentary statutes till the year 1567, after her abdication and the appointment of the Earl of Moray as Regent.

The year 1560 was also rendered memorable by the first meeting, which took place on the 20th of December, of the General Assembly of the Church, a body destined to play an important part in subsequent Scottish history. The first Assembly consisted of no more than six ministers and thirty-six commissioners or elders, who immediately nominated forty-three more persons as those most qualified to be ministers or readers in charges unsupplied. For a considerable time the Assembly met twice every year.

Knox and the other ministers who had drawn up the Confession of Faith were also commissioned to frame a constitution for the reformed Church. The scheme they prepared, as set forth in the Book of Policy—otherwise known as the First Book of Discipline—was a very elaborate one. Only its leading features can be here noticed.<sup>1</sup>

There were to be no bishops in the *prelatic* sense of that term. As the number of Protestant preachers was as yet utterly inadequate, the country was to be divided into ten or twelve provinces or dioceses, and a minister placed over each as superintendent, whose duty was not only to preach and perform other pastoral work at his own church, but to visit and preach throughout his province; to place ministers or readers in churches not yet supplied; to take account of

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<sup>1</sup> The best copy of the First Book of Discipline is that given by Knox (*Works*, vol. ii.).



the diligence and conduct of ministers, the order of the churches, and the manners of the people; and to see that provision was made for the instruction of youth, and the maintenance of the poor. He himself was to be liable to censure and correction by the ministers and elders of his province. The institution of superintendents was a temporary expedient, and they were to be admitted in the same way as other ministers. Though the General Assembly, to which they were subject, afterwards requested that several more should be added to the five already nominated, yet for various reasons this was never done; and commissioners or visitors were appointed to do similar work from one Assembly to another. The meetings of the superintendents twice every year with the ministers and delegated elders of their provinces originated the half-yearly Provincial Synods which are still held.

The ministers were to be chosen by the people, or appointed with their consent, and after due examination admitted by the superintendents, with prayer, in presence of the congregation. As to ordination, the authors of the Book of Discipline declared that ‘albeit the Apostillis used the imposition of handis, yet seeing the miracle is ceased, the using of the ceremonie we jüge is nott necessarie.’ Many of the early ministers, however, had been ordained priests before the Reformation.

Ruling elders, as distinct from teaching elders or ministers, and deacons were to assist the minister in the public affairs of the church, the elders more especially being associated with him in the judgment of causes and the oversight of the people. The deacons were to collect and distribute the revenues and alms of the church. Both elders and deacons were to be elected by the people, but only for a year, lest by long continuance in office they should ‘usurp a perpetual dominion in the church.’ They might, however, be re-elected. Their meetings with the minister every week or oftener formed the court still known as the Kirk-Session.



It was in consequence of the scarcity of persons qualified for the ministry that the ancient office of reader, above referred to, was at this time revived. His duty was to read the Holy Scriptures and the Common Prayers in a congregation destitute of a pastor. This duty was also commonly performed by a reader in those churches—at least in the larger ones—which were provided with a minister. In 1574 the plan was adopted, in accordance with the parsimonious policy of the Regent Morton, of putting one minister in charge of three or four churches, with a reader under him in each of them. Readers were not permitted to administer the sacraments; but they might exhort the people, and if approved in that duty might afterwards be promoted to the ministry. When parish schools were instituted, the offices of reader, schoolmaster, precentor, and session-clerk were generally united in the same person.<sup>1</sup>

The Common Prayers above mentioned were those of the Book of Geneva. In 1557 the Protestant Lords had authorized the use of the English Liturgy, or Second Book of King Edward VI., and it was read in some parts of the country. Afterwards the Liturgy drawn up by Knox and others at Frankfort in 1554, and published two years later for the use of the congregation of English refugees at Geneva, was adopted in Scotland. In 1562 this Book of Geneva was reprinted in Edinburgh with additions, and in that year the General Assembly enjoined its use in the ministration of sacraments, in marriages, and in burials. In 1564, when it was again printed in Edinburgh, in an improved and enlarged form, and conjoined with a metrical version of the Psalms, the Assembly ordained it to be used ‘in prayers’—that is, in the ordinary service on Sundays—as well as in

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<sup>1</sup> The schoolmaster of Logie still enjoys an endowment of fifty merks annually, the produce of an old ‘mortification’ of a thousand merks by a laird of Logie to the reader. Similar endowments exist in Monimail and some other parishes.





marriages and ministration of the sacraments. It was known as the Book of Common Order, and is often called Knox's Liturgy. The minister was not rigidly confined to the forms it supplied; and his prayer immediately before sermon and, if he chose, the one after it were extemporaneous. It was recommended in the Book of Discipline that the Common Prayers should be used also in family worship.

It was further enjoined that men, women, and children should be exhorted to exercise themselves in psalm-singing, so that, when assembled in church, they might be able with one heart and voice to praise God—a part of the service in which the people before the Reformation had no share, and now greatly delighted.

In large towns there was to be sermon, or at least the reading of Common Prayers and Scripture, daily; in smaller towns Common Prayers and sermon on one day in every week besides Sunday; and every church was to have a Bible in English. In towns possessing schools and learned men there was to be a weekly meeting of ministers and readers for the exercise of 'prophesying,' or interpretation of Scripture, to which the people were to be admitted as auditors. Ministers and readers residing within six miles of such towns were to take part in those meetings, or 'Exercises,' as they were called; from which, about the year 1581, Presbyteries were evolved, the meetings of which then, and long after, always commenced with the interpretation of a portion of Scripture by two or three of the members.

Two of the seven sacraments of the Roman Church—Baptism and the Lord's Supper—were alone recognized. As regards the former, Knox's Liturgy enjoined that the infant to be baptized should be 'accompanied with the father and godfather,' but there is no mention of the latter of these sponsors in the Book of Discipline. This sacrament was to be administered after sermon on Sundays or week-days, and with water only; and the use of oil, salt,



wax, spittle, and conjuration, and of the sign of the cross, was forbidden.

Though the Lord's Supper is mentioned in Knox's Liturgy as being 'commonly used once a month,' in the Book of Discipline it is stated to be sufficient that this sacrament be administered four times in the year; and it is recommended that the festival days of the Roman Church should be avoided. (In 1562 the Assembly appointed it to be observed four times in the year in burghs, and twice in country parishes.) Those intending to communicate, especially such as were suspected of ignorance, were to be examined previous to each celebration; and all who could not say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments were to be excluded. The people were not to be defrauded of the cup as in the Church of Rome, and were to sit at a table, as being the position equivalent to that taken when the Supper was instituted. The minister was to break the bread and distribute it, and hand the cup, to those nearest to him, who, in like manner, were to give them to others till all had partaken, as being 'nyest to Christis actioun, and to the perfite practise as we reid it in Sanct Paull.' During the 'action' it was thought necessary 'that some comfortable places of Scripturis be red, quhilk may bring in mynd the deith of Christ Jesus, and the benefite of the same.'

Marriage was to be performed in church, and in the audience of the people, on Sundays before sermon. (Kirk-sessions for some time after the Reformation commonly ordained that parties who desired to be married must first be tried upon their knowledge of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments.)

At funerals there was to be no reading—that is, prayers—or singing, lest these things should be thought to profit the dead; nor was any kind of ceremony to be used 'uther than that the dead be committed to the grave with such gravitie and sobrietie, as those that be present may seame to



fear the judgmentis of God, and to hate synne, which is the caus of death.' Yet each church might use its liberty in this matter, subject to the Assembly of the whole Church. In Knox's Liturgy it is stated that when the interment has been completed, 'the minister, if he be present, and required, goeth to the church if it be not far off, and maketh some comfortable exhortation to the people touching death and resurrection.' Funeral sermons were disapproved of. (Yet Knox himself preached a sermon on the death of the Regent Moray.)

Every master of a household was to be commanded either to instruct, or cause to be instructed, his family and servants in the principles of the Christian religion; and every year, at least, all persons come to maturity were to be publicly examined by the minister and elders on their knowledge and belief of the same.

As the 'order of Ecclesiastical Discipline' was judged necessary for 'the reprovng and correcting off these faultis which the civill sweárd doeth eather neglect, eather may not punische,' evil-doers of every rank and calling, rulers and preachers, as well as the poorest of the people, were to be subjected to the discipline of the Church, and excluded from participation in prayers and sacraments till they professed their repentance; and if their offences were public and heinous, they were to do this in presence of the congregation. Those who remained impenitent were to be excommunicated.

Out of the revenues of the Church provision was to be made for the sustentation of the ministers (including that of their widows and children), of the teachers of youth, and of the poor. Stipends of specified and moderate amount were to be given to superintendents, ministers, and readers, in proportion to their respective needs and spheres of labour. It was not thought necessary to make provision for elders and deacons, because they were to hold office only for a year,



and were not, like ministers, prevented by their official duties from earning their living by secular employments.

A comprehensive system of national education was proposed, embracing a school in every parish, in which should be taught the elements of religious and secular knowledge; a grammar school or college in every notable town; and a course of instruction—which was sketched out in great detail—in the existing Universities. Attendance at the parish schools was to be compulsory; and to the poor education was to be free. From these schools the aptest pupils were to be sent to the grammar schools, and, if they had poor parents, and especially if they came from country parishes, were to be both maintained and educated at the public expense. From the grammar school, in like manner, those of greatest capacity were to be sent to the University and trained for the learned professions; and it was required that education in all its stages should be under the control and supervision of the Church.

The Book of Discipline was approved and subscribed by many members of the Privy Council, yet it never received, as did the Confession of Faith, the sanction of Parliament. For this there were two reasons. One was the strictness of the ecclesiastical discipline proposed to be exercised. The other and chief reason was, that the Protestant nobles and barons, having already acquired part of the possessions of the old Church, wished also to secure, as by various devices they were in course of time successful to a great extent in securing, for themselves the remainder. Their concurrence had been readily obtained so long as the zeal of the Reformers was directed against the errors of Romanism. But when the authors of the Book of Discipline proposed that after the reformation of the Church was effected, the funds required for the sustentation of the ministry, the education of the people, and the support of the poor should be obtained from the ecclesiastical property, they met with determined oppo-





sition. Only paltry sums could for some time be procured for the first of these objects, while the other two were neglected. In 1567 Parliament enacted that all teachers, whether public or private, in universities and schools must be 'tried' by the superintendents or visitors of the Church, and this jurisdiction was afterwards transferred to Presbyteries; but it was not till a later period that parochial schools were established by the State. Yet in the interval many were instituted through the influence of the Church; and these formed a goodly instalment of the grand scheme of national education planned by Knox and his associates. Though important parts of the comprehensive polity set forth in the Book of Discipline were thus never carried out, most of its proposals other than financial were put in operation by the Church herself in the exercise of her intrinsic powers; and the means of religious instruction and improvement so amply provided by the agencies of preaching, teaching, and catechising, and by the correction and restraints of Church discipline, produced marked and enduring effects on the moral and intellectual condition of the Scottish people.

Some of the methods and regulations prescribed in the Book of Discipline were in course of time modified or discontinued. Thus ordination to the ministry by imposition of hands was restored in 1578 by the Second Book of Discipline, which also appointed that elders and deacons should hold office during life. Presentation to churches by the former patrons, if it was ever suspended by giving to the parishioners the election of their ministers, was resumed. In 1565 the ecclesiastical leaders acknowledged that the right of presentation belonged to the patrons, while they claimed for the Church the right of collation. In 1567 Parliament gave legal effect to both of these rights. In 1579 the General Assembly allowed marriages to be solemnized in church on any day of the week (the banns having previously



been proclaimed on three Sundays) if there was a sufficient number present, and if the ceremony was conjoined with preaching.<sup>1</sup>

MR. ARCHIBALD KEITH was the first Protestant minister of Balmerino. He is said to have been appointed in 1560—at the very commencement of the Protestant establishment—to serve both the churches of Balmerino and Logie-Murdoch.<sup>2</sup> We shall see that he is expressly mentioned in December 1562 as minister of ‘Logy and Balmerino,’ and in terms which seem to imply that he had been in office for some time previous to that date; and there is evidence that there was a minister at Logie so early as 1561, who, doubtless, was Mr. Keith. It is certain that Protestant services were regularly held in June 1562 in St. Ayle’s chapel, then used as the parish church of Balmerino. In the existing scarcity of preachers Logie was thus for a time united to Balmerino, no doubt on account of its ancient dependence on the Abbey. The circumstance that Logie is once or twice mentioned as the first of the united charges is probably accidental. In September 1561 Logie possessed a reader, whose name was David Forret, and also deacons. At Balmerino likewise there was perhaps a reader, though I have not found any express mention of such an official, or of any stipend assigned to him. One of the *quondam* monks may have acted as reader, maintained by his pension from the revenues of the Abbey; or perhaps the reader of Logie may have officiated at each of the churches when the minister was conducting the service in the other one. There would doubtless be deacons also at Balmerino, though no notice of them occurs. At both churches elders would be associated with Mr. Keith. We shall see that they

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<sup>1</sup> In 1581 the Assembly forbade ministers to celebrate marriages, or to administer the sacraments, in private houses under pain of deposition.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix to *Selections from Minutes of the Synod of Fife* (Abbotsford Club).



are expressly referred to as holding office in Balmerino parish in 1568.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Keith's duties would be arduous. The people had hitherto been taught that religion consisted mainly of the so-called sacrifice of the mass, prayers and masses for the relief of souls from an imaginary purgatory, confession of sins to a priest, adoration of images, invocation of the Virgin Mary and departed saints, observance of saints' days, and other superstitious practices. Previous to the Reformation the prayers of the Church were said in a tongue unknown to the people, and the few sermons that were preached were largely composed of silly legends about saints, laudation of the virtues of indulgences, and such like. Education, or acquaintance with Scripture, was extremely limited. Such being the condition of the people, much instruction would be needed to eradicate from their minds error and superstition, and to implant a knowledge of the genuine truths of the Word of God. The process would be slow and gradual, even though the people eagerly listened, as we know they did at that period, to the preaching of the pure Gospel. The simplicity of the Protestant Church services would form a striking contrast to the pomp and ceremonies they had previously been accustomed to witness.

When both the minister and reader were present the service was as follows. The bell, which had been rung at seven o'clock in the morning, was rung again at eight, when the people assembled, uncovered their heads, and said a short prayer. The reader then entered the lectern or reading-desk, and read the public prayers from the Book of Common Order, while the people knelt. He next gave out one or more Psalms to be sung. He then read some large portion of Scripture; and whatever book of the Old or New Testament was begun was 'orderly read to the end' on successive Sundays.

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<sup>1</sup> *Register of St. Andrews Kirk-Session*, vol. i. pp. 124, 146, 125, 300 (Scot. Hist. Soc.).



At a later period the Psalm-singing came after the Scripture lesson. These exercises lasted about an hour. When they were ended, the bell was rung the third time. The minister then entered the pulpit, knelt for private devotion, and after an extemporaneous prayer for a blessing on the Word to be preached, gave out his text and delivered his sermon, during which the people sometimes applauded, and often sat with their heads covered—the latter being a practice which prevailed also in England after the Reformation, and was not quite extinct in Scotland till the eighteenth century at least. The minister next read from the Book of Common Order one of the intercessory prayers for Christ's Church and for all men, or extemporised one to the same effect, and then said the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. A Psalm followed, the singing of which (and of the other Psalms also) was concluded with the Doxology; after which the minister pronounced the Benediction. Such was generally the order of divine service for about eighty years after the Reformation. Sometimes there was an additional prayer, ending with the Lord's Prayer, and also another Psalm, before sermon. When the minister was absent, the reader's service consisted of the Common Prayers, singing, and reading of Scripture as above, without sermon, though there might be exhortation.

In the afternoon the young were examined, in the audience of the people, in Calvin's Catechism, which was first reprinted in Edinburgh in 1564, and was usually joined to the Book of Common Order. The Catechism was divided into fifty-five sections, so as to be gone over in about a year; and when the examination was concluded, the minister expounded to the whole congregation the doctrine of that day's portion. When there was neither catechizing nor preaching in the afternoon, the Common Prayers were read.<sup>1</sup> The custom of commencing service so early as eight o'clock in the morning was doubtless

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<sup>1</sup> See Sprott and Leishman's edition of the *Book of Common Order* and *Directory* (Introductions).





a survival from pre-Reformation times. A later hour was afterwards adopted.

A plan having been authorized in 1561, as we have seen, for allowing two-thirds of the benefices of the old clergy to be retained by them during life, and for appropriating the remaining third partly to the sustentation of the Protestant ministers, and partly to the use of the Crown, commissioners were appointed by the Privy Council for the purpose of 'modifying' or apportioning stipends to the ministers, which usually ranged from one hundred to three hundred merks. These sums were frequently ill paid. Mr. Keith's stipend must have been paltry in amount, as appears from the following statement in the Records of the General Assembly,<sup>1</sup> under the 29th of December 1562:—

'Mr. Archibald Keith, minister of Logie and Balmerinoch, was discernit be the Kirk to be translated fra' the forsaid kirks to sick place as where his stipend sould be more aboundantie givin him, in case he be not reasonable satisfiet be the Lords appointit to modifie the ministers' stipends, provydit that he change not at his awin privat opinion, but to have therein the judgement and appointment of the Kirk, who sall give their judgement herein or this Assemblie be dissolved.'

The promised judgment is not recorded. It forms, however, a striking illustration of the treatment of the Protestant ministers by those in authority, that in a parish every acre of which was Church property the minister was placed on a starvation allowance. 'Thair was none within the Realme,' says Knox, 'more unmercyfull to the poore Ministeris then war thei whiche had greatest rentis of the Churches'; that is, who had got possession of the largest portion of their revenues. In December 1567 Parliament granted the whole of the 'Thirds of benefices for the use of the Protestant ministers 'ay and quhill (until) the Kirk cum to the full possessioun of thair

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<sup>1</sup> *Booke of the Universall Kirk of Scotland*, Part i. p. 28 (Ban. Club Ed.).



proper patrimonie, quhilk is the Teinds.'<sup>1</sup> By this small concession stipends were somewhat increased.

As Balmerino parish was included in the province of which Wynram had been appointed Superintendent, cases of discipline originating in it, probably after having first come before the Kirk-session of Balmerino, were, for some years subsequent to the Reformation, disposed of at St. Andrews by the Superintendent and his council, which consisted of the elders and deacons, or Kirk-session, of that city. The first of such cases was that of Alexander Car, who, as we have seen, had been in monastic times a 'chaplain'—probably of St. Ayle's. His offences and the Superintendent's decision regarding them are stated in the Register of St. Andrews Kirk-session under the 3rd of June 1562:—

'The quhik daye, Alexander Car, sumtym called Schyr Alexander Car, and Madd[e] Sanderis . . . delated to the Superintendent, summond, comperand and accused, confessis thar gyltines, ar desyrus and contentit to contract and solemnizat mariaige, for avoyding of selander, mutuall societie and help of ather toward other, and weyll of thar barnis . . . In respect of the quhilk, the Superintendent ordenis tham to compeyr in the essemble of Balmerinaucht parroche kyrk this nixt Sunday the xiiij of Junii instant, and thar confes thar ald lang transgression and offencis, ask God mercy and the congregacion forgyfnes, and to solemnizat thar mariaige wythin xl dayes nixt heirefter, under pan[e] of excommuniacion.'<sup>2</sup>

The next case is that of John Yester, formerly a monk of the Abbey. The Balmerino Writs show that after the Reformation he had married, and in the absence of other information it might appear probable that, having become a Protestant, he followed still farther the example of Luther

<sup>1</sup> The Commendator of Arbroath, in a letter dated 19th July 1567, speaks of the ministers as 'frustrate of their livings, dieing in the street for hunger and cold.'—(*Booke of the Universall Kirk*, Peterkin's ed., p. 62.)

<sup>2</sup> *Register of St. Andrews Kirk Session*, vol. i. p. 146.



by disregarding his vow of celibacy, and voluntarily taking to himself a wife. But the St. Andrews Kirk-session Register furnishes a very different explanation of his marriage. On the 18th of March 1561-2 he had been taken under discipline by the Superintendent, and had promised to abstain from the company of Helen Bunche. This promise he had broken, and on the 3rd of March in the following year ‘comperis Johane Zeasteris, suntym monk in Balmerinach, summond to underly disciplyn for cummyng in contrar of his promys . . . to absteyn fra company . . . wyth Eleyne Bunche . . . Quhilk offencis the said Jhon Zeasteris confessis, offerris hym redy to underly disciplyn of the kyrk, and also offerris hym redy and wylling to solemnizat mariaige wyth the said Eleyne; and this nixt Sunday hymself to compeir, and do his exact diligence to caus the sayd Eleyne compeir wyth hym at Sanct Talis (St. Ayle’s) kyrk, consent to the proclamacion of thar bannis, and wythin xl dayes at the farrest nixt heirefter solemnizat thar mariaige. In respect of the premissis and that the same salbe deuly performit, the Superintendent ordenis the saydis Jhon and Eleyne this nixt Sunday following to compeyr in the public essemble of the congregacion of Sanct Talis kyrk, and thar mak public satisfaccion befoyr proclamacion of thar bannis, and to fulfyll the foyrsayd premissis in all punctis under pane of excommunicacione.’<sup>1</sup>

Before 1567 Mr. Keith was translated to Longley (St. Fergus), in Aberdeenshire, where he had 200 merks for stipend, with Peterugie (Peterhead) and Crimond also in charge. He ministered and resided successively at these places, where he was the first Protestant minister, as he had been at Balmerino and Logie, and died at Crimond before the 25th of February 1595.<sup>2</sup>

MR. PATRICK AUCHINLECK or AFFLECK was the second Protestant minister at Balmerino, with a reader under him

<sup>1</sup> *Register of St. Andrews Kirk Session*, vol. i. p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> *Scott’s Fasti Ecclesie Scoticanæ*, vol. iii. Part ii.



at Logie. It is uncertain when he was admitted: the first mention of his incumbency occurs in the year 1571.

Previous to the Reformation the ceremony of marriage had been preceded by a formal act of espousal before a priest and three or four trustworthy witnesses. Two cases from Balmerino parish, which were tried before the Superintendent Wynram at St. Andrews, show that this ancient custom, otherwise known as *handfasting*, still continued to be practised, though in a different manner, under the name of 'contract.' It was afterwards forbidden by the General Assembly, and with good reason, as parties who were handfasted frequently lived together as husband and wife without being regularly married. This, however, is not asserted of the persons concerned in the two cases now to be adduced, which were processes raised at the instance of members of the fair sex against their faithless swains, not to obtain from them pecuniary compensation for breach of promise, as the method now is, but to have them compelled by ecclesiastical authority to make good their espousals by marriage in face of the Church.

On the 11th of August 1568, Margaret Wilson having, in her process before the Superintendent, been required by him 'to produce witnes for probatioun of promis of mareage betwix hir and Patrik Gourlay, producit Richart Leis in Balmerynocht, Alexander Gyllet in Kilbyrnis, syster sone to the mother of the said Margaret, Johne Brown in Coultray, William Gourlay in Souththeid, William Gourlay in Lucheris, David Grig in Fordell, Henry Gourlay in Lucheris. And Johne Michel in Balmerynocht, and Thomas Stevinson thair, [probably the *quondam* monk of that name] somond and nocht comperand, the Superintendent sett the first day of September nixt to cum, to do diligence for Johne Michel and Thomas Stevinson; and to produce utheris witnes sa mony as the partie plesis, and Christen Braed and Patrik Gourlay [are] warnit to compeir the said day.' Christen Braed, however, did not compear.





Richart Leis, who was probably the session-clerk, 'deponis that, upon the x day of Junii last bipast, the saidis Margaret and Patrik being in Christen Braed hows in the Demins of Balmerynocht, the deponent [did] write the contract of mareage betwix the saidis parteis, and referris hym thairto; and forthir, befoir diverss famous witnes, saw thair handis layit togethir; and being requirit quhat wordis war pronuncit, the deponent can nocht tell.'

'Johne Brown . . . deponis and sayis, that [he] the deponent layit the twa parteis handis togethir, and said ilk ane of them was content of utheris to go to mareage; and the deponent sperit at Patrik Gourlay, Ar ye nocht content? And he ansuerit and said, And (*i.e.* if) I war nocht content the mater had nocht cum sa far fordward! And [they] kissit [each] utheris; and the deponent thareftir said, Ye maun mary wythin xl dayis.'

'William Gourlay in Souththeild . . . deponis, that he kennis the contract maid betwix the parteis, bot kennis nocht the promis of mareage.' With his evidence that of the other two Gourlays, Gillet, and Grig, agreed.

The case was resumed on the 1st of September, when Thomas Stevenson, being 'sworn, resavit, and examinat, deponis that he was present at the contract-making betwix thame, and saw Johne Brown, walcar,<sup>1</sup> ane of the eldaris of Sanct Teal (St. Ayle's) parrochion, lay the parteis handis togethir; bot Patrik Gourlay spak nocht ane word: and forther kennis nocht in the caus.'

'Johne Michelson (or Michel) . . . deponis that he was present, etc., and saw thair handis laid together be Johne Brown, ane of the eldaris, etc.; and [it] being demandit be hym of them gyf they war content of [each] utheris, hard them say that they sa war.' •

On the 15th of September, the case being again resumed,

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<sup>1</sup> That is, *walker* or *fuller*. It appears probable that there was a 'walk-mill' at Cultra at that period.



‘comperit Andro Bartelaytht and Robert Thomsoun in Balmerynocht . . . quha war resavit and sworn; and forthir probation renuncit in presence of Patrik Gourlay. . . . Robert Thomsoun . . . deponis that . . . upon the day of the contract-making . . . he was present in Christen Braed hows; quhair he saw and hard Patrik Gourlay cry on Margaret Wilson, being at the burn-syde weschyng claitht, and said, Margaret, sen we sould eik and end of this mater lat us go til it. And thaireftir incontinent they cam into the hows; and Johne Brown in Cowtray sperit at Patrik Gourlay, Ar ye content to have this woman to your wyf? And he said, Ye! And [in] lik maneir sperit at Margaret gyf sche was content to have Patrik to hir husband, and she said, Ye! And then the said Johne Brown, ane of the eldaris of Balmerynocht, said, I sal lay your handis togethir’—and other words which need not be quoted.

‘Andro Barclaitht, quha and Margaret Wilson ar sister bairnis, [gave evidence] conform to Robert Thomsoun.’

‘The Superintendent, in respect of the depositionis of witnes product of befor and this day, fyndis the promis of mareage betwix Patrik Gourlay and Margaret Wilson sufficientlie provin; and thairfor decernis and ordanis thame to proceed to the solempnization of mareage betwix thame wythtin fourty dayis undir paine of excommunication; and letteris to be gevin furtht heirupon als oft as neid beis.’<sup>1</sup>

The other case was commenced on the 30th of March 1569. ‘The quhilk day, James Thomsoun, dwelland in Balmerynocht, being somound wytht my Lord Superintendentis lettres, to heir him decernit to complet and perform the band of matrimonie wytht Jonet Smytht, according to his promis maid to hir thairupon, the saidis parteis compering be thame selves, the said James denyit al promis. The sett (Session) assignat this day ancht dayis to preve the sam. *Partibus apud actu citatis.*’

<sup>1</sup> *Register of St. Andrews Kirk Session*, vol. i. pp. 298–302.



On the 6th of April, the following witnesses were 'productit by the said Jonet, David Kay in Southt Ferritoun of Portin Craig, Thomas Kay his brother thair, and Simon Adam thair, in presence of the said James, nathyng being objectit aganis them,' etc.

'*In primis*, the said David Kay, sworn,' etc. 'deponis that, foure yeris syne or thairby, [he] the deponent was present in Simon Adam hows quhen James Thomson and Jonet Smytht maid mutual promis of mareage ilk ane to uthir, and at that tyme ilk ane [was] content of uthir, in presence of Sande Mathow in Kilburnis, Henry Boytour, Simon Adam, and Thomas Kay, and was contentit that thair bannis sould bein proclamat on Sunday nixt thaireftir. And in verification heirop the deponent promittit (promised) of his gear to the said James iiij lib., and Simon Adam promittit iiij bollis malt.' The evidence given by this witness was confirmed by that of Thomas Kay.

'Simon Adam, father of law to Jonet Smytht . . . deponit conform to the first witnes; and forthir deponis that he hard and saw the promis maid, and held up handis for performing of the premissis.'

On the 6th of July, Jonet Smytht produced the Superintendent's letters duly excuted and indorsed upon Mathow and Boytour, to bear witness in the action. But 'na persoun comperand, the seat referrit the orlour to be takin thairintil to the Superintendent.'<sup>1</sup> The case, however, does not again appear in the Register, so that we know not whether the jilted Jonet gained her action and a husband or not. Let us hope that she did, and that David Kay and Simon Adam had to hand over their promised wedding gifts, both of money and malt.

On the 30th of March 1569, another case came before the Superintendent, being the first occurring in Balmerino parish

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. St. Andrews K. S.*, vol. i. pp. 315-16, 321.



that is recorded in which a delinquent had to appear in sackcloth at the church door. Usually such persons had to stand at the door till prayers were ended. They were then allowed to enter the church, and sit on the 'stool of repentance,' that they might hear the sermon, at the conclusion of which they had to return to their station at the door, as they were not permitted to join with the congregation in prayer. The following is the record of the case referred to: 'Katharine Awat, dwelling in Balmerynocht, being somoind wytth my Lord Superintendentis lettres, dilatit . . . confessis the offence,' which was a heinous one; 'heirfoir [the Superintendent] ordenis hir to stand thre Sundais in sek claytht in the maest patent kirk dur of Balmerynocht; and in the last Sunday to be resavit to the kirk. And forthir ordenis thame (her partner in guilt and herself) to be committit to the magistratis of the reylm, to be punesed according to ordour takin.'<sup>1</sup> In the following year the General Assembly enacted that heinous transgressors should appear not only in sackcloth, but bare-headed and bare-footed—a penance prescribed also in the Church of England.

In 1571–2 the stipends of the minister of Balmerino and the reader at Logie are stated for the first time, as follows:—

'*Balmerynoch and Logy*—Mr. Patrik Auchinlek, minister, iiij<sup>xx</sup> (fourscore) merkiis, Lambnes 1571, and xl merkis mair sen beltyin (Mayday) 1572. Henry Leche reidare respective xvij li. lambnes 1571.'<sup>2</sup> In 1574 the latter *item* is given as xix li., xiiij s., iiij d.

In 1576 these stipends, and the sources whence they were obtained, are thus stated:—

'*Balmerinach, Logymurtho*. Maister Patrik Affleck, minister, his stipend lxxx li. to be pait out of [the] therd of the Abbay of Balmerynach.

<sup>1</sup> *Register of St. Andrews Kirk Session*, vol. i. p. 315.

<sup>2</sup> *Register of Ministers and thair Stipends sen the year of God 1567* (Maitland Club).





‘Henry Lietch, reidare at Logymurtho, his stipend xvij li. with the kirk land of Logiemurtho, to be payit as follows, viz. the thrid of the vicarage of Logymurtho v li., vj s., viij d., and out of the therd of Balmerinoch xj li., xij s., iij d.’<sup>1</sup>

The minister’s stipend, reckoned according to the prices of bere and oatmeal at that period, would only amount to little more than four chalders.<sup>2</sup> Such were the privations to which ministers were subjected for many years after the Reformation, that they were mainly dependent on the charity of the people, and were sometimes compelled to resort to secular callings for the means of subsistence. In the records of the General Assembly, under the year 1576, we find the following, among ‘Questions resolved by the whole Assembly’:—‘Whether if a minister or reidar may tap aile, bear, or wine, and keep an open tavern?’ The answer given by the Assembly was not a prohibition of such employment as unsuitable for a minister even though he were starving, but an injunction as to the manner in which he should carry it on:—‘Ane minister or reidar that taps aill, or beir, or wyne, and keips ane opin taverne sould be exhortit be the Commissioners [of the Assembly] to keip decorum.’<sup>3</sup>

We have now to mention a curious incident in which the minister of Balmerino was very probably concerned. It had been customary in the Roman Catholic Church to have dramatic

<sup>1</sup> *Books of Assignment and Modification of Stipends.*

<sup>2</sup> The prices in Fife were then, *commumbus annis*, in Scots money:—

Wheat . . .	£26	12	4	the chalder (16 bolls).
Bere . . .	21	6	8	
Oatmeal . . .	16	0	0	
Oats . . .	13	6	8	

—(*Miscellany of the Wodrow Society*, p. 395.)

Previous to 1603, when James VI. succeeded to the English throne, the value of Scots money in comparison with that of England varied. In that year it was finally determined that the proportion of the latter to the former should be as 12 to 1; that is, the English pound was to be equal to £12 Scots, and the English shilling to 12s. Scots.

<sup>3</sup> *Booke of the Universall Kirk*, Part i. p. 378 (Bannatyne Club Ed.).



representations of events in sacred history, known as 'miracle-plays' and 'mysteries,' of which the Passion-play still performed at Ober-Ammergau in Bavaria is a survival. The Reformers were not always hostile to such exhibitions. Luther is reported to have said, that they often did more good, and produced a deeper impression, than sermons. Both sacred and secular plays were often acted on Sundays. In Scotland the custom lingered for some time after the Reformation. An instance is thus referred to in the Register of St. Andrews Kirk-session under the 21st of July 1574:—

'Anent the supplicatioun gevin be Maister Patrick Authinlek [or Auchinleck] for procuring license to play the comede mentionat in Sanct Lucas Euuangel of the forlorn sone (that is, the parable of the prodigal son) upon Sunday the first day of August nixt to cum, the seat hes decernit first the play to be revisit be my Lord Rectour, Minister; M. Johnne Rutherfur[d] Provost of Sanct Saluatour Colledge; and Mr. James Wilke, Principal of San[et] Leonardis Colledge, and gyf they find na falt thairintill, the sam to be play[it] upon the said Sunday the first of August, swa that playing thairof be nocht occasioun to wythtdraw the pepil fra heryng of the preaching, at the howre appointed alsweil eftir nune as before nune.'<sup>1</sup>

The ministers, elders, and deacons of St. Andrews were summoned before Commissioners nominated by the General Assembly, to answer for their having granted this permission; and ministers and all others were soon afterwards forbidden, under severe penalties, to have plays on the canonical Scriptures performed either on Sundays or on other days. The Assembly at the same time ordained that secular plays should be examined before they were acted, and that they were not to be played on Sundays. In 1576 the Assembly refused permission to the town of Dunfermline to play upon Sunday afternoon 'a certane play quhilk is not made upon the Canonicall parts of the

<sup>1</sup> *St. Andrews Kirk Session Register*, vol. i. p. 396.



Scripture, in respect of the Act of the Assemblie passed in the contrair.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Patrick Auchinleck above mentioned was master of the grammar school, and also an elder, in St. Andrews; yet there is great probability that he, and the minister of Balmerino of the same name, were one and the same person. It may, indeed, seem incredible that the incumbent of Balmerino could hold another office in St. Andrews involving, for most part of his time, non-residence in his parish. Yet in 1563 it had been found that ministers, exhorters, and readers were in the habit of dwelling in towns far distant from their churches—doubtless, in most of such cases, because, from various circumstances, either there were no manses in their parishes or these were otherwise occupied—and the Assembly ordained those who had manses to dwell in them. As we shall see, there was no manse at Balmerino till many years after Mr. Auchinleck's incumbency; and there is some reason to believe that his successor, Mr. Thomas Douglas, resided at St. Andrews. There were other cases of pluralism, as well as of non-residence, after the date of the Assembly's injunction. Mr. William Ramsay, who was an elder in St. Andrews from 1562 to 1569, and one of the Masters of St. Salvator's College from 1561 to 1570, was also minister of Kilmany from 1564 to 1568.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Andrew Simson was master of the grammar school of Perth, and during four or five years after the Reformation—while holding this office and teaching 300 scholars—was also minister of two parishes, Cargill about nine miles north of Perth, and Dunning about the same distance south-west of it. He was translated in 1566 to the parish of Dunbar, where also he was master of the grammar school as well as minister, and distinguished for his eminence in both offices.<sup>3</sup> In favour of the identity of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Booke of the Universall Kirk*, Part i. p. 375.

<sup>2</sup> See *St. Andrews K. S. Register*, vol. i. p. 4 and *note*.

<sup>3</sup> See *Lee's Lectures on the History of the Church of Scotland*, vol. i. pp. 261-3.



master of the grammar school of St. Andrews and the minister of Balmerino is the rarity of the name Patrick Auchinleck. But a weightier argument is the fact, that the minister of Balmerino having been presented to the church of Alves in Morayshire in the year 1577, the elder of the same name disappears after that date from the Register of St. Andrews Kirk-session, in which he is previously several times mentioned. Their identity, though not certain, is for these reasons exceedingly probable.

In April 1576 Mr. Patrick Auchinleck appeared at the General Assembly as Commissioner from the city of St. Andrews, and protested in its name that the Assembly's sentence declaring the incompatibility of their minister, Mr. Robert Hamilton, holding also the Principality of the New College, 'prejudge not the toun of Sanct Andrews, nor ingender any prejndice to them touching their minister, without they be called or heard.'<sup>1</sup>

In November 1577 Mr. Auchinleck was appointed minister to the household of the Regent Morton, and obtained a gift from his Majesty of 'an yearly pension of iij li. from the superplus of the Thirds of Benefices.'<sup>2</sup>

It was on the 8th of January 1577-8 that Mr. Auchinleck was presented to Alves. In the following June he was appointed Commissioner for Moray; and in October of the same year complaint was made to the General Assembly that 'having a benefice in Murrey, [he] serveth not there'—a charge frequently made against those parish ministers who had also to perform the duties of Superintendents or Commissioners of provinces, and were thus frequently and necessarily absent from their own parishes, while visiting the districts assigned to them. In Mr. Auchinleck's case, however, no such explanation of his absence is stated by him or for him. Having been called before the

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<sup>1</sup> *Booke of the Universall Kirk*, Part i. p. 351.

<sup>2</sup> *Scott's Fasti*, vol. ii. Part ii. p. 472.





Assembly, he 'was commanded to enter his cure in Murrey, as he will be answerable to the Assembly. He promised to obey.'<sup>1</sup> In 1580 he was a member of the Assembly held in Dundee, and one of eleven who were chosen as 'Assessors' to the Moderator. He died at Elgin on the 5th of April 1581, leaving a widow, Margaret Guthrie.<sup>2</sup>

A Latin poem of seven lines on the subject of teinds, entitled *Patricii Authinlecti Carmen* ('The Poem of Patrick Authinlect'—in all probability the minister of Balmerino—is given in 'Tracts by David Ferguson, Minister of Dunfermline, 1563–1572,' printed for the Bannatyne Club. The brief poem is given below.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Booke of the Universall Kirk*, Part ii. pp. 416, 421.

<sup>2</sup> Scott's *Fasti*, vol. iii. Part i., under *Alves*.

<sup>3</sup> 'Qvisquis de decimis bonisque sacris  
Quæ sacris dominus dari ministris  
Mandavit, dubitas, et anne nostro  
Solui tempore debeant requiris,  
Hunc vnum legito rogo libellum  
Istam qui eloquio pio sacroque  
Rem totam aperiet tibi que pandet.'



## CHAPTER II

### MR. THOMAS DOUGLAS

‘We sail the sea of life—a calm One finds,  
And One a tempest—and, the voyage o’er,  
Death is the quiet haven of us all.’

—WORDSWORTH.

MR. THOMAS DOUGLAS, designed of Stonypath, was minister of Balmerino and Logie in 1578, as appears from the Books of Assignation of Stipends. Henry Leiche was still reader at Logie, and also in the following year; and he performed the same duty at Cupar. The *name* of the reader at Logie is not given in the above-mentioned record under 1580, though his stipend is stated at the same amount then as previously; nor is there mention of a reader at Logie, or of his emoluments, after that date. Henry Leiche appears to have been a member of the Kirk-session of St. Andrews from 1582 to 1584. Before the 12th of January 1586 he was admitted minister of Crail; and was elected to Auchtermuchty in December 1590, where he died in 1613. As a specimen of a minister’s library, nowise contemptible in those days, when books were costly and stipends inadequate, the number and value of the volumes possessed by Mr. Leiche at his death may be here stated:—‘Of theologie buikis and utheris buikis twenty four mekill greit buikis, with twelf scoir and sixtein uther glaspit buikis; price of theme all, j<sup>c</sup>xl li.’ (£140).<sup>1</sup>

On the 21st of March 1580–1 the King, by letter under the Privy Seal directed to Mr. Thomas Buchanan, Provost of Kirkhill, Commissioner over the kirks within Fife, and nephew

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<sup>1</sup> Scott’s *Fasts*, vol. ii. Part ii. p. 469.



of the celebrated George Buchanan, presented 'Mr. Thomas Douglas, minister,' to the vicarage of Logie, vacant by the decease of 'umquhill Mr. Thomas Forrett, last vicar and possessor thair of.'<sup>1</sup> Mr. Forrett may have been a Protestant minister, appointed in order that, by the disjunction of Logie from Balmerino, each of these parishes might have its own minister; in which case he could only have been in office one year or part of a year, and after his death the two parishes must have been again united under the ministry of Mr. Douglas. But it is much more probable that Mr. Forrett had been the vicar of Logie previous to the Reformation, continuing to enjoy after that event two-thirds of the vicarage stipend, while the remaining third and the kirk-land were given to the Protestant reader. In favour of this supposition is the fact, that from 1576 to 1580, and, doubtless, previous to that time, the reader at Logie had one-third of the vicarage as part of his living; while, after Mr. Forrett's death and Mr. Douglas's presentation to the vicarage, the stipend of the latter, as minister of the united parishes, included the whole vicarage of Logie.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Douglas was Laird of Stonypath, and belonged to an ancient family. In 1411 Sir James de Douglas of Robertoun obtained a charter of the lands of Stanypathe from his father James de Douglas, lord of Dalkeith, descended from the first Earl of Dalkeith, who lived in the time of King David II. and was an ancestor of the Earls of Morton.<sup>3</sup> The minister of Balmerino was apparently a descendant of this person. His property of Stonypath was in Peeblesshire, and must not be confounded with another of the same name two miles west of

<sup>1</sup> *Register of Presentation to Benefices.*

<sup>2</sup> In the General Assembly of 1580 one of the Articles proposed to the King and Council was, 'that all benefices vaikand [by the death of the Roman Catholic incumbent or otherwise] where ministers are plantit, be gine to ministers serwing the cure where they vaike,' that is, to the Protestant ministers already placed there.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas's *Peerage* (ed. Wood).



Whittinghame, in the county of Haddington, which at some period between 1574 and 1628 was acquired by another branch of the Douglasses, after it had for a long time been possessed by a family named Lyle.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to Stonypath, Mr. Thomas Douglas either inherited or purchased a considerable amount of other landed property. He possessed eight oxgates of the town and lands of Langtoun and Dubend in the barony of Caldereleir and regality of Dalkeith, a tenement in Edinburgh, and the lands of Broomhoilles in the lordship of Newbotle and constabulary of Haddington.<sup>2</sup> In Balmerino parish he obtained in 1602 a charter under the Great Seal of six acres in Scurrbank, the third part of the lands of Drumcharry and Bottomeraig, two acres of Leadwells, the lands of Park and Poyntok, Craigingrugie's Fauld extending to four acres, three acres in Harlands, and one in Woodflat, with pasturage on the three last-named places and on the outfields of Byres. He retained these various lands, however, with the exception of Scurrbank, for only six months.<sup>3</sup> In 1620 King James VI., by feu-charter under the Great Seal, of new granted to him in liferent, and to James Douglas his eldest son, the half of Dron Easter and Wester; and to him and his wife Mary Kinneir in liferent, and to James their son, a fourth part of the lands of Ardet, with the manor, and a pendicle called the Sithill; and another fourth part of the lands of Ardet called the Cowplawhills, acquired from the Earl of Duncaster and Barclay of Innergellie; all which the King incorporated into the free tenandry of Cowplawhills.<sup>4</sup>

In 1585 Mr. Douglas's stipend stands in the Books of Assignation as augmented to 'j<sup>c</sup>xxxiiij li., vj s. viij d.; thair of the haill vicarage of Logymurtho xvj li., and the remanent, to be paid out of the thrid of the Abbay of Balmerinoch, extends to j<sup>c</sup>xvij li., vj s., viij d.'

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. iv. No. 2279; vol. viii. No. 1315.

<sup>2</sup> *Abbreviate of Retours.*

<sup>3</sup> *Balmerino Writs.*

<sup>4</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. viii. No. 22.





In 1588 his stipend is further increased to 'the baill vicarage of Logymurtho xvj li., and the remanent to be pait out of the third of the Abbay of Balmerinach, extending to jclxxx li., vj s., viij d.' with the addition of 'iiij li., xj s., j½ d.; xij bollis, iij firlotts, ½ pairt peck beir; j chalder, xj bollis, ij firlotts, j peck, ½ pairt peck meall; to be pait out of the third of the Abbay of Lundoris.'

Though the plan had been adopted of placing one minister in charge of several churches, the General Assembly at length condemned this arrangement, and took means to put an end to it. Consequently, on the 20th of November 1589 Mr. Douglas was one of fourteen ministers of the Presbytery of St. Andrews (in which Balmerino parish was then included) that 'hes tain thaim,' the Presbytery minutes inform us, 'to be ministers at ane kirk only, and hes demittit the rest.' Accordingly, on the 16th of January following, the Presbytery ordained 'Mr. Thomas Douglas only to be imbuikit at the kirk of Balmerinoch.' Thus Logie became vacant. Mr. Douglas, however, may have continued to officiate there some time longer, as the next minister, Mr. John Loutfut, is not mentioned till 1595. The latter was presented to the vicarage of Logie in 1600; and thenceforth that parish was always served by its own incumbent.

Previous to the Reformation those who officiated at Cathedral or Abbey churches, if they were canons or monks residing within the precincts of the Cathedral or monastery, had no need of manses or glebes. At Balmerino—whether St. Ayle's church had been served by a member of the convent or by a secular chaplain—there was no manse or glebe. In 1563 and 1572 Parliament transferred the manses and glebes of the Roman clergy, where such existed and came to be unoccupied, to the Protestant ministers; but no express provision was made for ministers who officiated at Cathedral or Abbey churches. In 1581, and again in 1586, the General Assembly requested Parliament to make such provision. On the 17th



of March 1590-1, the Presbytery of St. Andrews ordained 'Mr. Thomas Buchanan and Mr. James Melvin to give institution to Mr. Thomas Douglas to the personage of Balmerinoch, and give in lyk maner designation of his manss and gleib.' On the 1st of July following the Presbytery of new ordained two of its members to design a manse and glebe to Mr. Douglas at Balmerino.<sup>1</sup> An Act of Parliament was passed in 1592 extending the enactments of 1563 and 1572 to parishes connected with Cathedral and Abbey churches, and providing that ministers serving such cures should have a sufficient manse either within the precincts of the Cathedral or Abbey, or near to the church; and also that they should have a glebe of at least four acres Scots, situated near to the manse. The injunctions of the Presbytery of St. Andrews in 1590 and 1591 having been ineffectual, they issued a similar order on the 28th of July 1593; and from the provisions of the Act of Parliament of 1592 it may be presumed that a manse and glebe were given to Mr. Douglas for the first time soon afterwards. They were somewhere near the Abbey—the precise situation is unknown—till the year 1682, when they were excambed for a house and land at Bottomeraig, as shall be noticed under that date.

If there was a manse at Logie for its vicar, it must have become about the year 1595 uninhabitable; for Mr. Loutfut had to build one for himself. It had been ordained by the General Assembly which met in Dundee in 1593, that where there was no manse, or where it was ruinous, the parish must build one or repair it; and that in the case of their failing to do so, if the minister built one at his own expense, his heirs should retain possession of it till the next incumbent refunded the amount of his outlay. Mr. Loutfut having died in 1612, Margaret Forrett, his widow, petitioned the Synod in the following year, that security should be taken of his successor for the

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<sup>1</sup> *Presbytery Minutes.*



repayment to her of the cost of the manse. The value she set upon it was 740 merks; but the Synod appointed a committee, of which Mr. Thomas Douglas was a member, to inspect and value it; and they estimated it at 500 merks. The Synod therefore ordered this sum to be paid to the minister's widow. In 1590, or soon thereafter, the church of Logie also was 're-edified.' (*Synod Min.*)

In the charter, previously mentioned, of the Abbey lands and tithes obtained by Lord Balmerino from the Crown in 1607, by which he was held bound to pay out of the tithes sufficient stipends to the ministers of Balmerino, Logie, and Barry, these stipends were each fixed at four chalders of victual, and 100 merks additional in money, with an allowance for communion elements and a sufficient manse and glebe; the ministers being at the same time relieved of the burden of keeping their respective churches in repair. It appears from the Books of Assiguation that in the year 1615 the money part of Balmerino stipend was 200 merks, and that Mr. Douglas still retained his 'pension' from the Abbey of Lindores, which was slightly increased—to the extent of two bolls, one firloft, of bere—above its amount in 1588.

With regard to the ministers of the three parishes named being relieved of the obligation to repair their churches, it has been already stated that previous to the Reformation the parson or rector of a parish, or other recipient of the teinds, was obliged to uphold the chancel, while the parishioners had to keep in repair the main body of the church. An Act of the Privy Council of the year 1563 apportioned the burden between the parson and the parishioners (that is, the heritors); the former being subjected in one-third, and the latter in two-thirds of the expense incurred, whether the church had, or had not a chancel.

Many notices of Mr. Douglas occur in Calderwood's History of the Kirk of Scotland, the minutes of the Synod of Fife and of the Presbytery of St. Andrews, and other records of the



period. A paper in Calderwood, under the year 1585, makes mention of 'manie dissolute persons . . . whose corrupt lives could never abide ecclesiasticall discipline, [being] loosed to invade the lives, and shed the blood of the ministers of God's Word, whereof lamentable examples are in sindrie corners of the countrie, as Mr. Thomas Douglas,' and others.<sup>1</sup> The minutes of St. Andrews Presbytery contain many entries referring to this 'invasion' of Mr. Douglas and its perpetrator.

On the 20th of October 1586 John Forret, brother of the Laird of Forret, appeared before the Presbytery, in compliance with the advice of some of his friends, for the removal of the 'sclander' (or scandal) which he had committed by the shedding of the blood of Mr. Thomas Douglas, and declared his willingness to submit himself to the Church, though he could not understand that he had committed sklander against the Church by his having offended Mr. Douglas. Afterwards he 'denyit that he had offendit Mr. Thomas, and affirmit that the said Mr. Thomas had offendit him.' Both parties were ordered to appear again on next 'fuirsday' (as Presbyteries then met every week), and seventeen witnesses—among whom were George Stirk and David Stirk, probably of Ballindean—were summoned to give evidence regarding the 'invasion' of Mr. Douglas. Subsequently, the Presbytery found it sufficiently proven by the report of three ministers who had been appointed to examine the witnesses, that 'Jhone Forrett and his servand lay in waitt for the said Mr. Thomas Douglas for the space of thre hours efter his sermond maid at Balmerinoche, and thairefter at ane convenient place persewed and invadit him, and drew his bluid, and, except certane persons readders had intervenit, the said Mr. Thomas had bene in danger of his life.' The Presbytery further appointed commissioners to pass to the King's Majesty and Lords of the Secret (or Privy) Council, and humbly to supplicate 'that the said Jhone may be severelie punished in

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<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, vol. iv. p. 424 (Wodrow Society Ed.).





example of uthers, and [that] the said Mr. Thomas may without danger resort and returne fra his kirks, and do at all uther times his lauchtfull busines.’<sup>1</sup> The Register of the Privy Council<sup>2</sup> accordingly contains the following account of the case :—

‘ Holyroodhouse, 25 November, 1586.

‘ Complaint by Mr. Thomas Douglas, minister at Balmerinoch, as follows :—

‘ Upon 10th May 1584, “ being Sondag,” the complainer “ cumming fra the kirk of Balmerinoch quhairat he had bene dischargand his office and cure, toward Sanctandros in quiet and peccable maner,” Johne Forrett, brother german to David Forrett of that Ilk, and Jhone Young his servant, “ umbesett the said complenaris way at ane pairte thair of callit the Gowlis den, quhair thay had lyne at awaitt for his cuming by three houris efter sermone, and thair maist cruellie and unmercifullie invadit and persewit him for his bodilie harme and slauchtar, hurte and woundit him in the shouldare to the effusion of his blude in grite quantitie, and did that lay in thame to have slane him,” which “ they had not faillit to have accomplissit wer [it] not they wer stayed be sunn personis that intervenit and red him oute of thair handis.” . . . Mr. Thomas Douglas . . . the pursuer, appearing personally, John Forrett and Johnne Young, the defenders, failing to appear, are to be denouneed rebels.’

On the 22nd of December 1586 three members of Presbytery are sent to John Forret in order to induce him to submit to the discipline of the Church; and in the week following he appears, and confesses that he ‘ sklanderit the kirk in committing of the said fact, and for his offens submittis himselfe to the kirk willinglie.’ (There is here a blank in the Presbytery minutes from the 20th of April 1587 to the 9th of October 1589.)

The General Assembly interested itself in this case. Amongst ‘certan greeves’ of the Assembly given in to His Majesty on the 20th of February 1587-8 occurs the following :—

<sup>1</sup> *St. Andrews Presb. Min.*

<sup>2</sup> Vol. iv. p. 117.



‘*Item*, Mr. Thomas Douglas, minister of Logy, was cruellie invaded by Johnne Forret, brother to the Laird of Forret, as he came from his kirk on Sunday, and his blood shed, and no remedie putt therto.’<sup>1</sup>

On the 7th of May 1590 the Presbytery again orders Forret to appear, and satisfy for his ‘sklanders’ against the Church. He accordingly returns on the 14th of May, when an extraordinary scene is witnessed by the Presbytery. Having first confessed that he was guilty of another offence of which he stood accused, and promised to satisfy for it:—

‘*Secundlie*, being desyrit to satisfie for the sklander committit aganis the kirk in drawing of the bluid of Mr. Thomas Douglas, minister at Balmerinloch, he denyit the fact, notwithstanding of the tryall quhairbie he was convict of the said fact. Ane Act quhairbie he confessit the same, and submittit himself to the kirk, wes producit and red in his presence; quhilk tryall and actis he querrelit of falsett, saying we mycht writt upon [him] in our buikis quhat we pleasit, saying he wes not of purpuss to persew the said Mr. Thomas, and gif it had bene his purpuss to have persewit him, it suld not have bene his bluid, bot his lyfe. Quhairunto Mr. Thomas answerit, that he praisit God that his lyfe wes never in his hand, bot, contrare, the said Jonis lyfe wes in his hand, and God gave him victorie over him at that tyme; in signe and takin quhairof the said Mr. Thomas brak the said Jhonis sword. Upon the quhilk occasioun [that is, in presence of the Presbytery] he ntterit sic language to the said Mr. Thomas, Thou nor nane that appertenis to the[e] dar stand up and vow that in my face. And thairupon he cutt his gluif, and knist the half thairof to the said Mr. Thomas, provoking him; sayand, Gif thou or ony in the kin dar tak it up and meit me in ony place. And quhen as Mr. Nicol Dalgleis said he was far in the wrang falsefeing the actis and processis of the presbitrie, quhilk we behuifit to hald for treuth, and all his alledgances in the contrare for leis, and that he behaifit himself ungodlie and barbaruslie in using sic minassing and bosting in the presence of this auditour, and wes not to be sufferit and to be h[e]ard in so doing, bot aucht to be comunandit to depart from us,

<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, vol. iv. p. 661.



that we mycht do our turnis in Goddis fear without molestatioun, the said Jon answerit, I ken you weill aneuch, we sall meit in ane uther place; and quhen Mr. Nicol answerit, Suppose ye slay ane minister this day, ane uthir the morn, the thrid the thrid morn, thair wil be ay sum that wil call blak blak, condemn your wick-itnes, and discharge thair conscience notwithstanding all your hosting; as for me, this is the first day that ever I saw yow or knew yow. I have nō[eh]t to say to you, but I heit thir your maneris. And thir thingis were done in presens of the haill brethering assemblit in the New Colledge scholes, quhilk extraordinar and ungodlie behaviour the haill brethering condemnit as ane greit contempt of the majestie of God in the person of his servantis thair convenit, and as ane wechtie sklander done to the haill kirk of this cuntrie. And therfor ordanis commissioun to be gevin to Mr<sup>is</sup> Androw Melvin and Thomas Douglas [*blank*] till propon this matter to Mr. Rot. Bruice, and the presbitrie of Edr., that thai may complain to the Kingis Majestie, that ordour may be takin with sic ane extraordinar sklander. Ordanis Mr. Patrik Wemyss to teach in Balmerinoch kirk on Sondag nixttocum.'

Four weeks after this scene Forret appeared again, and offered to satisfy the Church according to such form as the Presbytery should appoint; and his offer was accepted. Subsequently, however, the Presbytery refused to prescribe a form of repentance to him till he should make 'ane mair simpill and cleir confessioun of the sklander committit be him aganis the kirk, and that in the presence of Mr. Thomas Douglas, minister at Balmerinoch.' It is evident throughout the whole proceedings that Forret's object was to get himself freed from Church censure without making any real acknowledgment of his guilt.

On the 2nd of July 1590 the Laird of Forrett promised to renounce 'the dewitie of ane brother to Jon. Forret gif he satisfiit not the kirk for his offence.' There is no account of further proceedings in the case; but in the Presbytery minute of the 26th of January 1590-1 John Forrett, brother-german to the Laird of Forrett, is mentioned as dead. It appears that he met with a violent death, and that John



Kinneir, son and heir-apparent of David Kinneir of that Ilk, was concerned in his slaughter. In 1593, in fulfilment of a decreet-arbitral, dated the 30th of April 1591, concerning this affair, 'and especially for the payment of £2000 ordered for satisfaction of the said slaughter,' the Kinneirs sold to David Forrett of that Ilk the lands of Torforrett.<sup>1</sup> The Kinneirs and Mr. Thomas Douglas were connected by marriage. Probably in consequence of John Forrett's conduct, the General Assembly in August 1590 petitioned the King for 'a law and ordinance against them that trouble and hurt ministers going to their kirks, and executing their offices.'<sup>2</sup>

In addition to his having been 'invaded' by the brother of the Laird of Forret, Mr. Douglas had been in danger of suffering similar treatment at the hands of the Laird himself, as appears from the following entry in the Register of the Privy Council: <sup>3</sup>—

'Band executed at Sanct Androis and Fingask, 24 August [1587] and witnessed by Thomas Cunninghame, Johnne Bower, Williame Hill, and Thomas Paty, registered by James Kay, writer, as procurator for the parties, containing caution in £1000 by Johnne Forrett of Fingask and David Watsoun, citizen of Sanct-androis, for David Forrett of that Ilk, that he will not harm Mr. Thomas Douglas, minister at Logy.'

The minutes of the Presbytery of St. Andrews contain the following entries:—

*11th June 1590*—'Ordanis Mr. Thomas Douglas to baptiss the Laird of Forrettis bairin at the Kirk of Balmerinoch.'

*2nd July 1590*—'Ordanis the minister of Kilmany to baptiss the Laird of Forrettis bairne upon conditioun that he acknowledge his falt in presenting ane bairn of his to the Bishop of Sanct Andros to be baptisit [the Bishop having been] suspendit for the tyme fra all funcitioun in the kirk, and

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Sigill. Mag.*, vol. vi. No. 750.

<sup>2</sup> Calderwood, vol. v. p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. iv. p. 211.















